CORNUCOPIA

TURKEY FOR CONNOISSEURS

ISSUE 44 2010

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Contents

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CONNOISSEUR

COVER STORY

A PASSION FOR FASHION
The cutting-edge couture of Dice Kayek, by Nilgin Yusuf · 9
ARTS DIARY, by Thomas Roueché · 24

TRAVEL

THE AEGEAN

SEA OF BLOOMS Botanical travels in the coastal Southwest
by Ro FitzGerald · 28

CENTRAL ANATOLIA

ON THE ROAD TO RUINS Anatolia in the 1880s, seen through the lens of John Henry Haynes, father of American archaeological photography, by Robert Ousterhout · 38

THE EASTERN BORDERS

QUEEN OF THE WILD FRONTIER Min Hogg journeys from Kars to Van · 94

PEOPLE & PLACES

THE BOTTLE-TOP MANSION The Ertegün family and the story of
Turkey's Washington Embassy, by Thomas Roueché · 58
ADVENTURES IN ISTANBUL Life in the Sixties, by Griselda Warr · 78
SILENT WITNESS The ethereal photographs of Metehan Özcan, by Maureen Freely · 102

BOOKS

PRICELESS PANORAMAS
An album of early-19th-century engravings of Istanbul goes under the hammer · 22
BOOK REVIEWS
Gerald MacLean on the ever-effervescent Evliya Çelebi
Rupert Scott on the enduring lure of ruins · David Barchard on the real story of the army
Caroline Finkel on the bias and self-interest of chroniclers · 17

FOOD

PLUM PERFECT, by Berrin Torolsan · 108

REGULARS

PRIVATE VIEW, by Andrew Finkel · 12
VILLAGE VOICES Azize Ethem's Iznik diary · 118
EATING OUT Andrew Finkel's quest for the Perfect Watering Hole · 126

Cover: A sculpted dress in white organdie by Dice Kayek
Courtesy of Istanbul Modern. See page 9

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PUBLISHING DIRECTOR
Berrin Torolsan
EDITOR
John Scott
CREATIVE DIRECTOR
Clive Crook
ASSOCIATE EDITORS
Susana Raby
Hilary Stafford Clark
Tony Barrell
CONTRIBUTING EDITORS
Andrew Finkel
Thomas Roueché
David Barchard
Rose Baring
DESIGNER
Kate Newman
COORDINATION
Emin Saatçı
CIRCULATION
Julie Hornsby
MANAGING EDITOR
Gündüz Aydınlar
WEBSITE
www.cornucopia.net

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The Latin *cornu copiæ* or 'horn of plenty', a horn overflowing with flowers, fruit and corn; symbol of prosperity and abundance in the cities of Anatolia.

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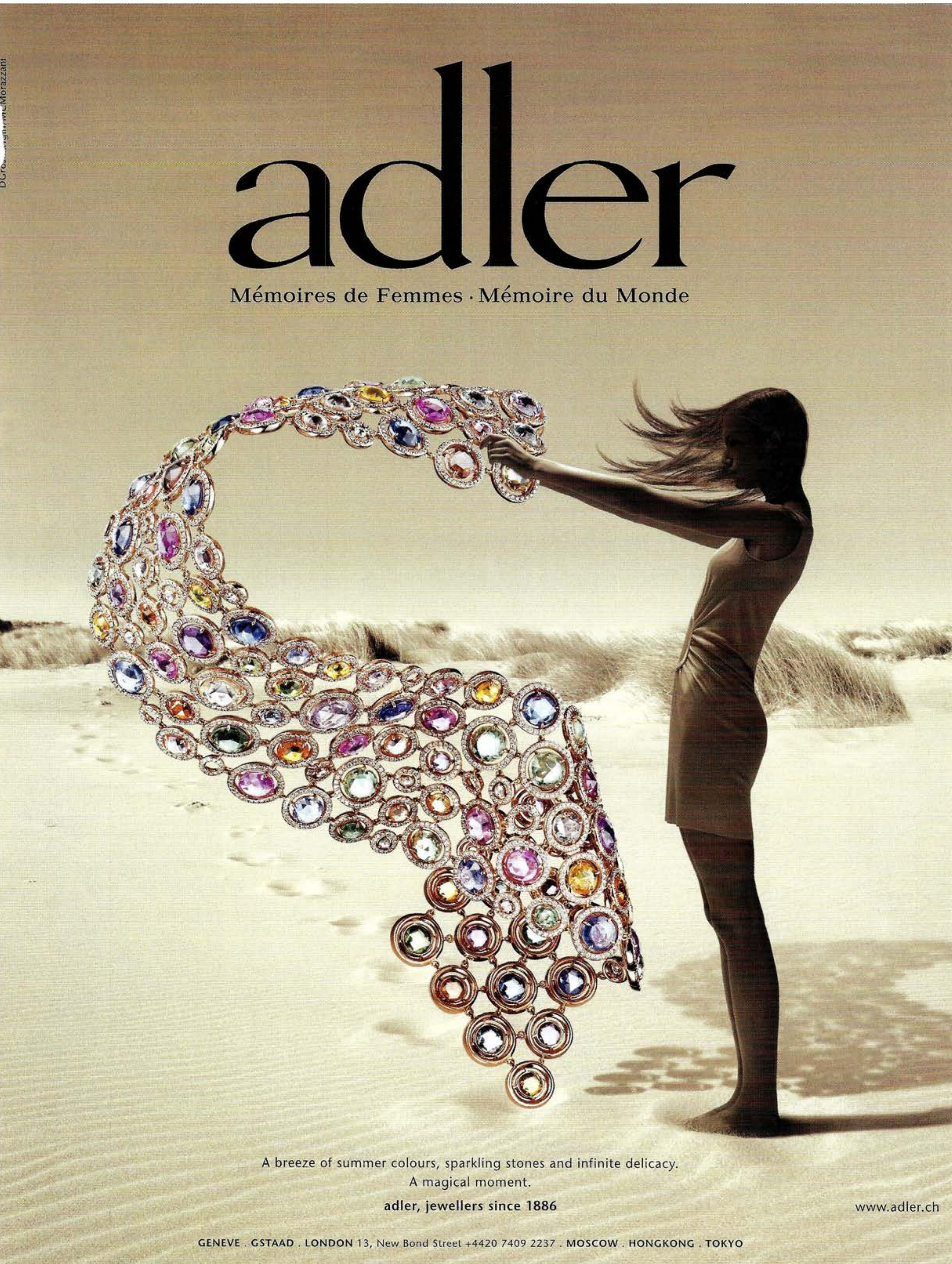
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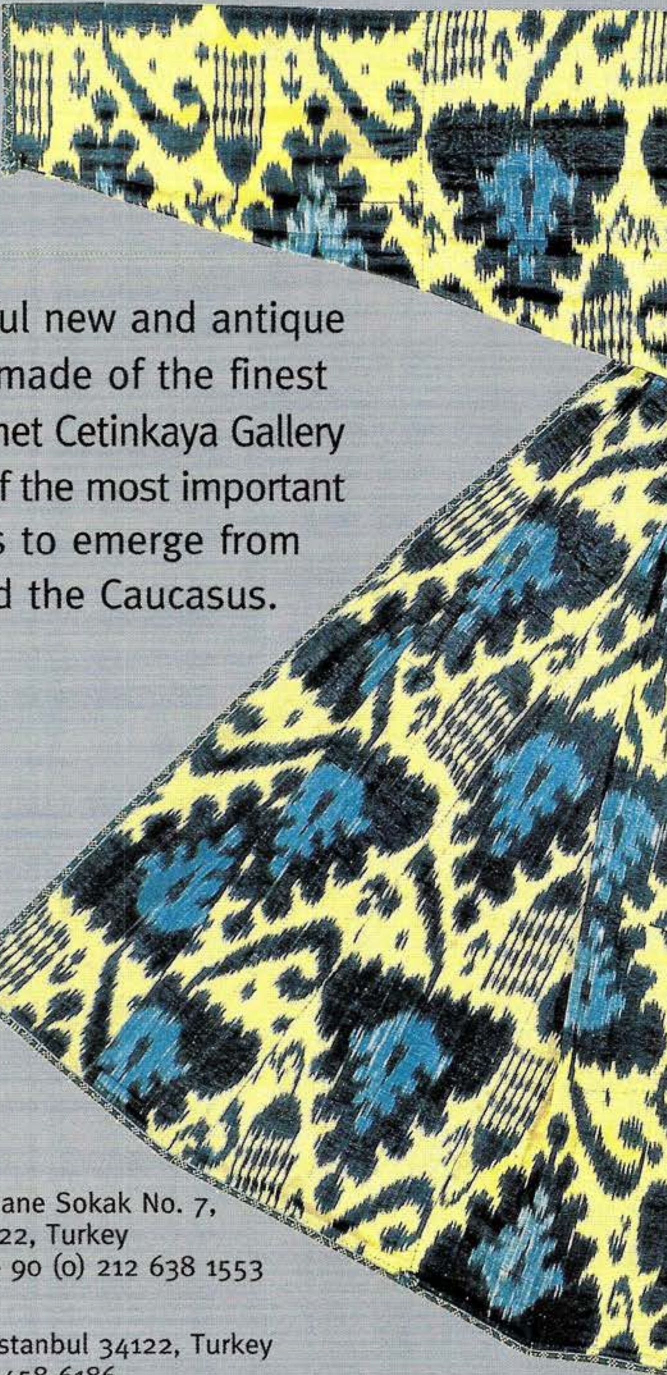

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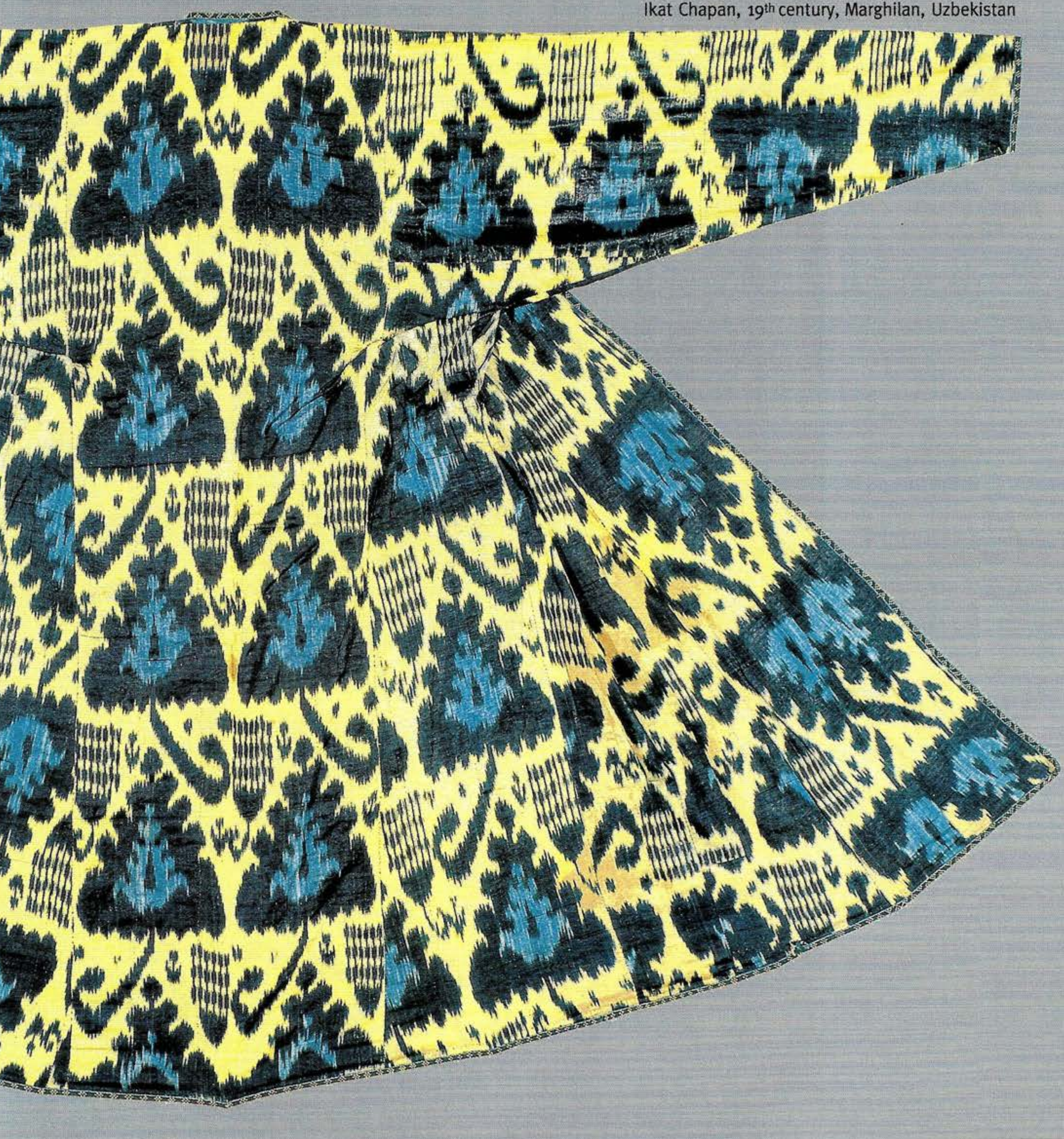
Ikat Chapan, 19th century, Marghilan, Uzbekistan



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CONNOISSEUR

FASHION AS ART, FROM KAFTANS TO COCKTAIL DRESSES, ERMINE TO IKATS, IN ISTANBUL, WASHINGTON AND LONDON

DRESS CODES

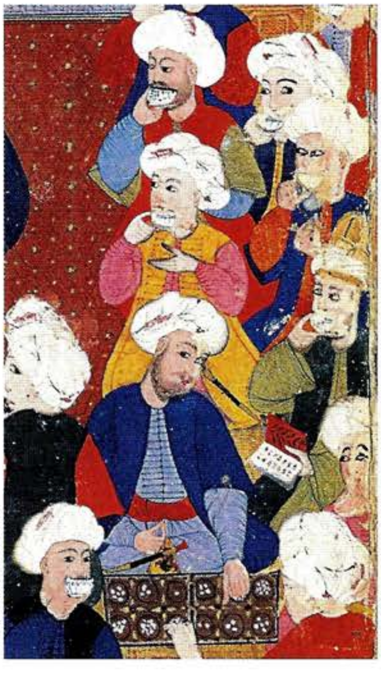
THE ARTS ARE FLOWERING ON THE BOSPHORUS AS THREE MUSEUMS STAGE UNMISSABLE SHOWS

THE ART OF READING

▷ This Persian painting of a young man reading is one of the Aga Khan's treasures on show in *Arts of the Book and Calligraphy in the Islamic World* (Nov 5 – Feb 27) at Istanbul's **Sakıp Sabancı Museum** (SSM). The work, in ink, watercolour and gold, has been attributed to the celebrated artist Mirza 'Ali, who worked in the library of the Safavid ruler Tahmasp I, and is dated to the early 1570s, towards the end of his life.

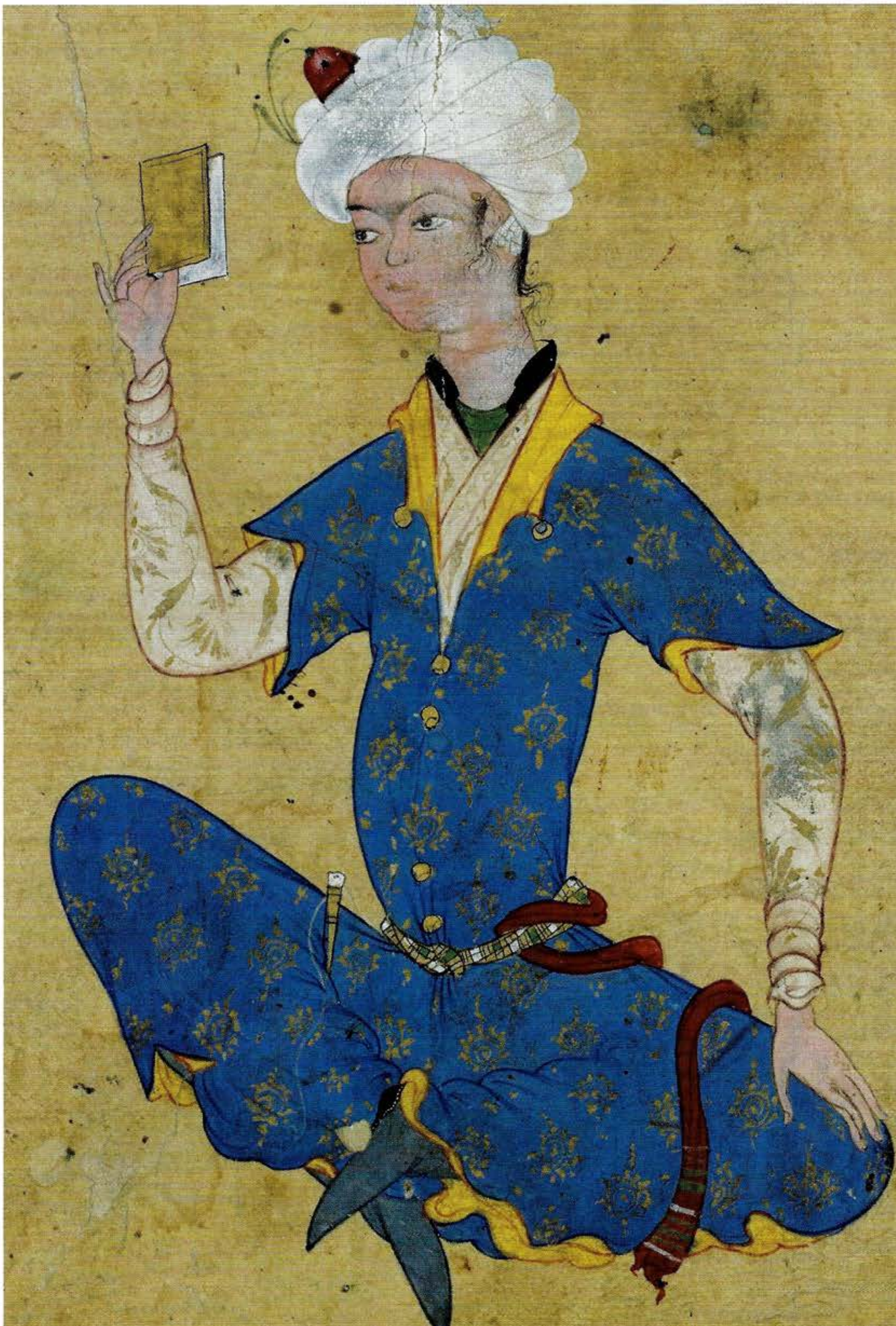
COFFEE SOCIETY

▽ The **SSM's** ambitious celebration this summer of eight millennia of Istanbul's history and prehistory included these cheerful coffee drinkers, again with flowers in their turbans. The 16th-century Turkish miniature belongs to Dublin's Chester Beatty Library. See muze.sabanciuniv.edu.



CHESTER BEATTY LIBRARY

COURTESY OF PRINCESS CATHERINE AGA KHAN

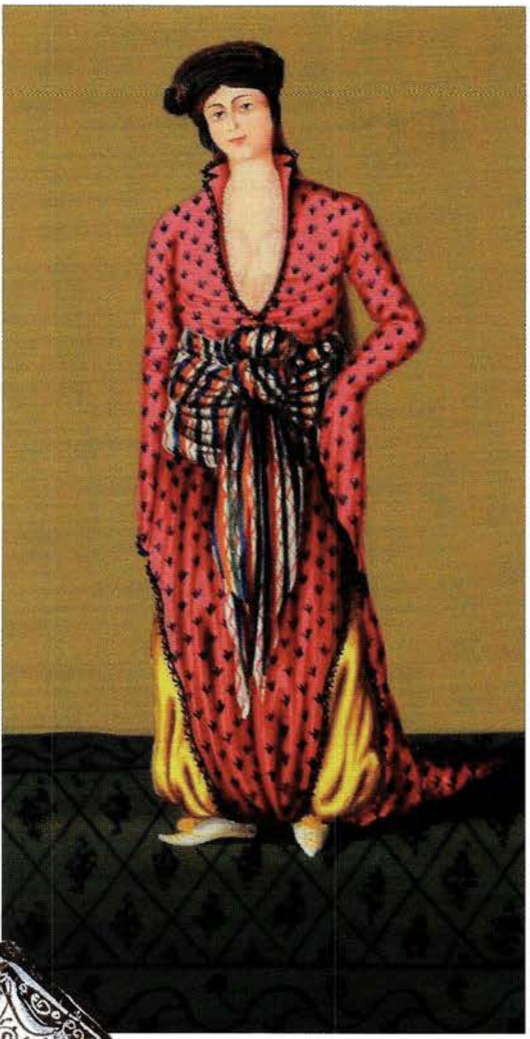


WASHINGTON RAINBOW

▽ In 19th-century Bukhara and Samarkand, grandees wore garments of vibrant colours and bold designs woven from skeins of silk thread. Murad Megalli's superb collection of these Central Asian ikats, donated over the past five years to Washington's **Textile Museum**, is now on show at the museum for the first time (*Colors of the Oasis: Central Asian Ikats*, Oct 16–March 13). The gorgeous ikat below is a *munisak*, a woman's robe, one of 185 garments in the exhibition. It was woven in Bukhara in the second quarter of the 19th century. To order the catalogue online, visit textilemuseumshop.com.

BOSPHORUS BEAUTIES

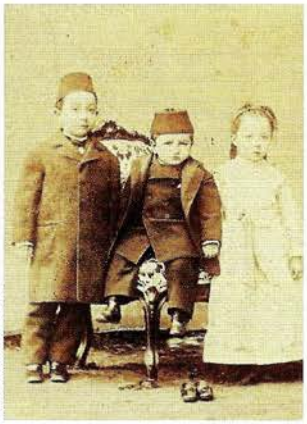
▷ The two beautifully attired women pictured right and below right feature in the mesmerising *Women's Costume of the Late Ottoman Era* at the **Sadberk Hanım Museum** (until Nov 7, see Cornucopia 43). The woman on the right wears a ruby-red *entari* over yellow silk *shalvar* trousers, with a flamboyant sash round her waist and a *hotoz* on her head. She is from an 1820s German album of gouache costume studies. Below right is an engraving after a drawing by the great Swiss 18th-century artist Jean-Étienne Liotard. A woman adorned in ermine stands on high pattens, or *nalın*, which were worn outside in wet weather and in the hamam.



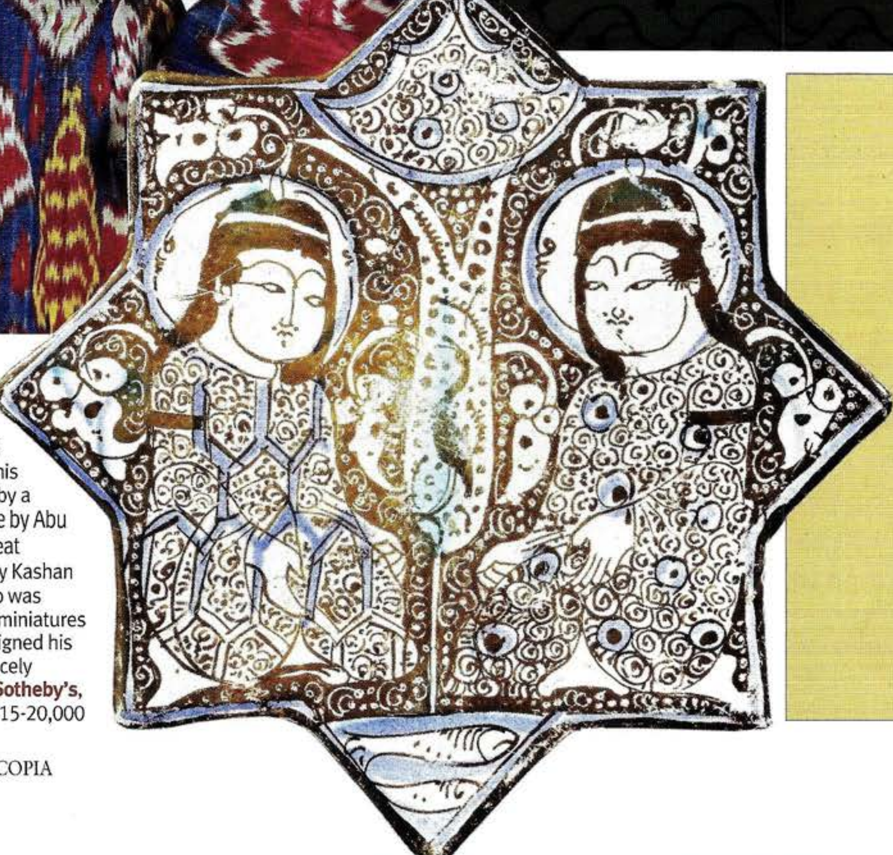
AT HOME WITH THE DYNASTY

▽ *Dynasty and the Camera*, which follows the costumes exhibition at the **Sadberk Hanım Museum** (from Dec 17), offers an intimate portrait of late empire. The paintings and photographs from the Ömer Koç Collection once belonged to members of the imperial Ottoman family. Many are dedicated by family members to each other. Below, photographed by Abdullah Frères c1879, are Abdülhamid II's son Mehmed Selim Efendi with his cousins Mehmed Seyfeddin Efendi and Esma Sultan, both children of Sultan Abdülaziz. Visit sadberkhanimmuzesi.org.tr. Catalogues are available online from cornucopia.net.

RENÉE COMET

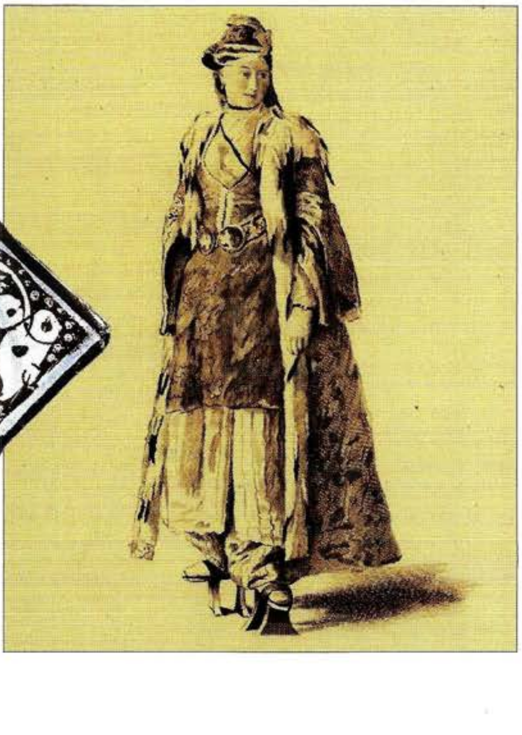


ÖMER KOÇ COLLECTION



KASHAN STAR

▷ The moon-faced figures on this tile, seated by a pool, may be by Abu Zaid, the great 12th-century Kashan master, who was inspired by miniatures and rarely signed his work. A Princely Collection, **Sotheby's**, Oct 5, est. £15-20,000

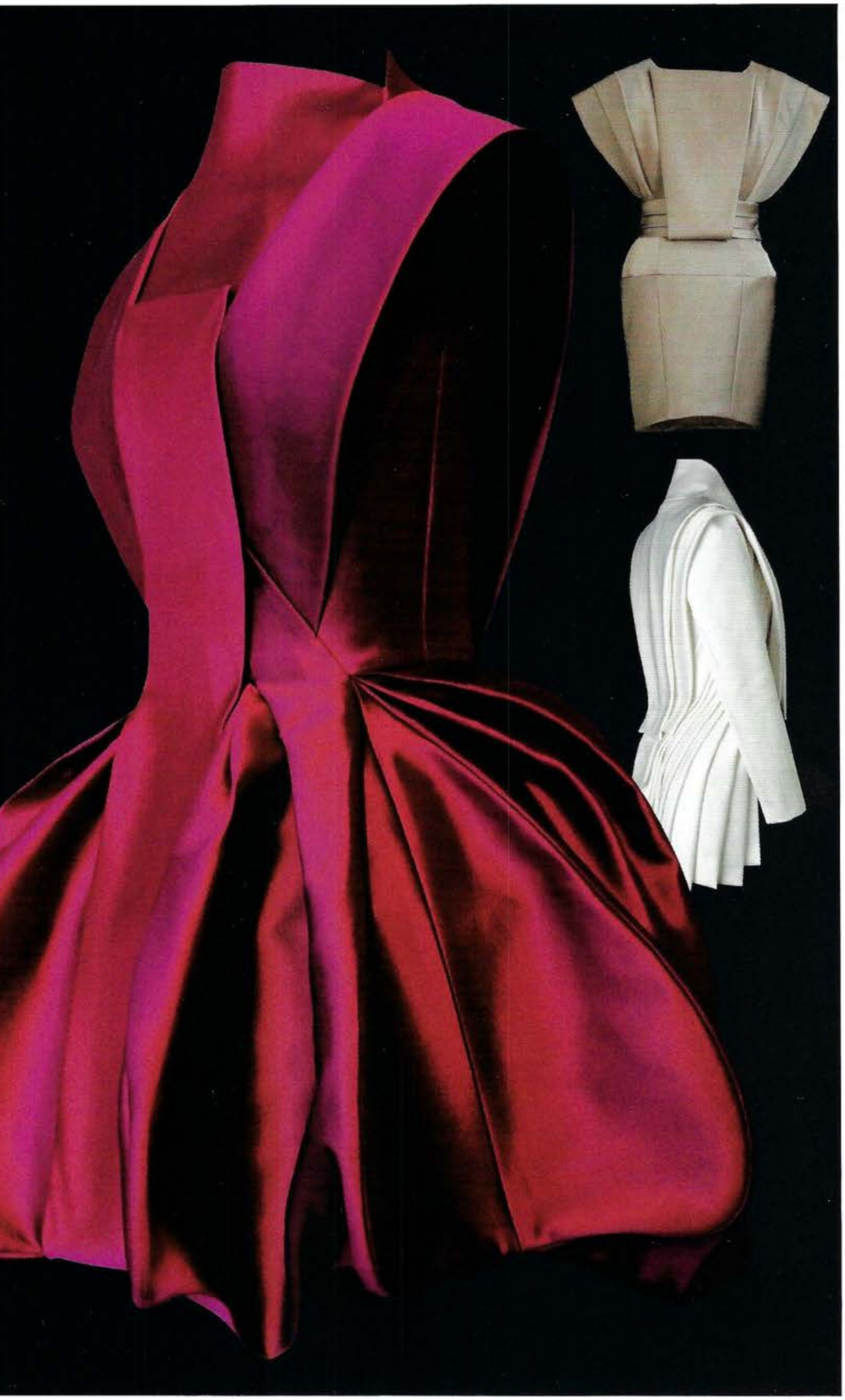


ÖMER KOÇ COLLECTION

A PASSION FOR FASHION

BY NILGIN YUSUF

The fashion label Dice Kayek (pronounced Dee-cha Kai-yek) is a linguistic invention. 'It's an alias,' the designer Ece Ege explains at her Paris studio, 'one associated with femininity and modernism, individuality and a post-romantic spirit.' The company was established in 1992 by Ece and her sister, Ayşe, and now represents the truly modern face of international Turkish design. The label was recently involved in a stunning exhibition at **Istanbul Modern**: a sartorial homage to the city entitled *Istanbul Contrast*. The show represented the various delights of the city with 26 dresses and two jackets – some from the Dice Kayek Gold Label couture collection, and others made for the exhibition. In each case the fabric was sculpted and carved into innovative forms. This cerise cocktail dress (main picture) was inspired, she says, by an upside-down tulip, while the pleated jacket of white silk gaberdine (bottom right) is reminiscent of a bird's wing. Dice Kayek's designs are more akin to intricate origami or complex modern buildings than fashion – indeed Ece is apt to make direct comparisons between dressmaking and architecture. 'The dress is like a building,' she says. 'You put it on and you are all dressed up – all you need is shoes.' Like an architect, she has a deep appreciation of the material she works with. She says that the white organdie she used to create a dress with pagoda pleating (pictured on the cover) is 'both soft and rigid', making it ideal for 'sculpting' into complex folds and pleats. The cocktail dress (top right) also has pagoda-pleated sleeves. This cutting-edge designer says it was a moment of great pride when one of her favourite architects, Zaha Hadid, attended the exhibition: 'I was thrilled!' More details: www.dicekayek.com



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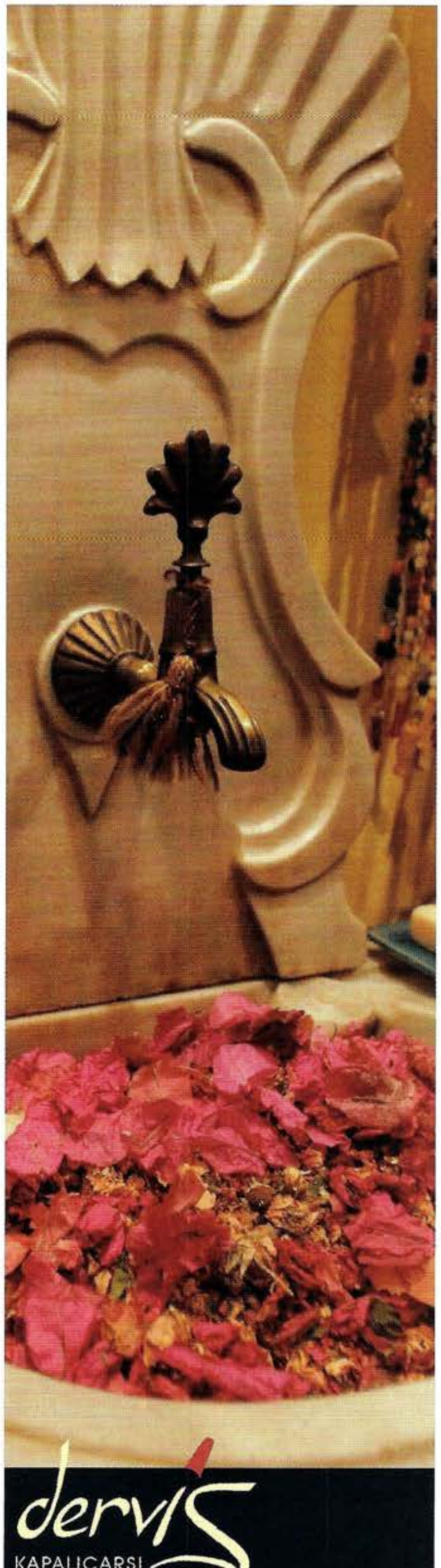

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Private view

Did Istanbul exploit or squander its year as 2010 European Capital of Culture? Andrew Finkel reviews the good, the bad and the ugly, and calls time on the fad for puns on the city's name

A year of wonders?

"Shall we stand here and shed tears and call each other names or shall we go to Istanbul?" Full marks if you recognise this quotation. In fact it was uttered by Kasper Gutman (aka the Fat Man) towards the end of *The Maltese Falcon* as encouragement to his merry but querulous band of thieves. Little did he suspect that Istanbul itself would become a hotbed of disputation – much of it over the way money has been spent on its role as 2010 European Capital of Culture. The sand in the hour-glass on this year-long festival is now running out, leaving the jury still bickering over whether Istanbul will finish the year with honour intact.

Part of the problem, perhaps, was that, in a city where empires were built, no one could really get behind an organisation timed to self-destruct on the stroke of midnight, December 31. Another is that one of the highlights was a subsidised concert by U2.

It would be churlish to deny that ECOC has been good in parts. There was the astonishing walk through the Istanbul millennia at the Sabancı Museum (Byzantion to Istanbul: 8,000 Years of a Capital). It was a privilege to lie on the lawn in front of the second gate of Topkapı Palace listening to the quartet led by 80-year-old Ahmad Jamal as part of a series of summer nights designed around the quirky theme of "Jazz in Ramadan". And 2010 did finally open its purse to push along an archaeological park at the site of the important ninth-century Satyros monastic complex on the city's Asian side.

Yet I fear 2010 will be better remembered as the year Istanbul was nearly put on probation by UNESCO for having ignored its obligations as a World Heritage site, or as the year the light turned green for the construction of a third Bosphorus bridge. UNESCO is upset that a metro link over the Golden Horn will blight the silhouette of the historic peninsula. What are they to make of plans for a tunnel from Asia that will pipe private cars into what should be an archaeological park?

LEVEND-SO-TÜNEL

THOSE WERE THE DAYS: A BUS CONDUCTOR IN THE 1950S IN SANTRALİSTANBUL'S EXHIBITION 'ISTANBUL 1910–2010'

However, ECOC has helped sponsor a project of which it and the city can be proud, and which will encourage Istanbullus to think about what the city once was and where it is headed. The exhibition at Santralİstanbul carries the subtitle: *The City, Built Environment and Architectural Culture*. If this sounds dull, believe me it is not. The curators have, for example, turned literally a million bits of data in the Istanbul Chamber of Commerce into something that comes alive. One of the results is a computer-generated, three-dimensional, 70-metre-square model of the 1930 city. The computerised map rooms show neighbourhoods changing before our eyes. Old photos remind us how quickly lifestyles emerge and disappear, how public spaces are transformed, how the familiar present is quickly turned upside down. The final corridor, 60 metres long, is lined with photos of the façades of buildings from the 19th-century Tünel district in Beyoğlu all the way to the skyscrapers of Maslak. We see the individual buildings with a detail one would never notice in the street. It takes a minute to traverse – the same time it would take an aircraft to make the actual 12km journey. But this is a time-lapse photographic journey of changing decades.

It is no more possible to stop change in a city like Istanbul than to halt an express train by standing in front of it. But this exhibition is an exhortation to understand and master that change.

Capital punishment

Among ECOC's unforgivable sins was its endorsement of an ad hoc congregation of authors, models, media figures – what organisers referred to as an "eclectic mix" –who descended on the city to give it a bit of celebrity buzz. Fair enough. But did they have to call the exercise Istancool? "If you have to call it cool, it isn't," a young friend who had spent the weekend crashing event after event told me. He had lived his formative years under the reign of another play on words, Cool Britannia, and was speaking from experience.

Poor Istanbul. Was ever a city so critically over-punned. Worst offender is a chain of orthodontic surgeries called Dentistanbul, though I realise that if you spend your days peering into people's mouths you need some light relief. But many of those who organised Istancool have art degrees; some have even written books. They should have higher standards. Let me grump on: I hate motor racing with a passion. It strikes me as a sport dedicated to corruption and air pollution, and I wince every time I think of the millions Istanbul wasted building a race track. The only saving grace is that the city elders had the decency to call the resulting mess of asphalt Istanbul Park and not Piste-anbul. Would a congress of dermatologists call their gathering Cyst-anbul? Or philatelists rally beneath the flag of I-stamp-bul? I think not. And were Istanbul ever to stage an international piano competition, I hope no one even considers calling it Lisztanbul. And yet there was a swimming championship in the city called (you guessed it) Istanpool ◆

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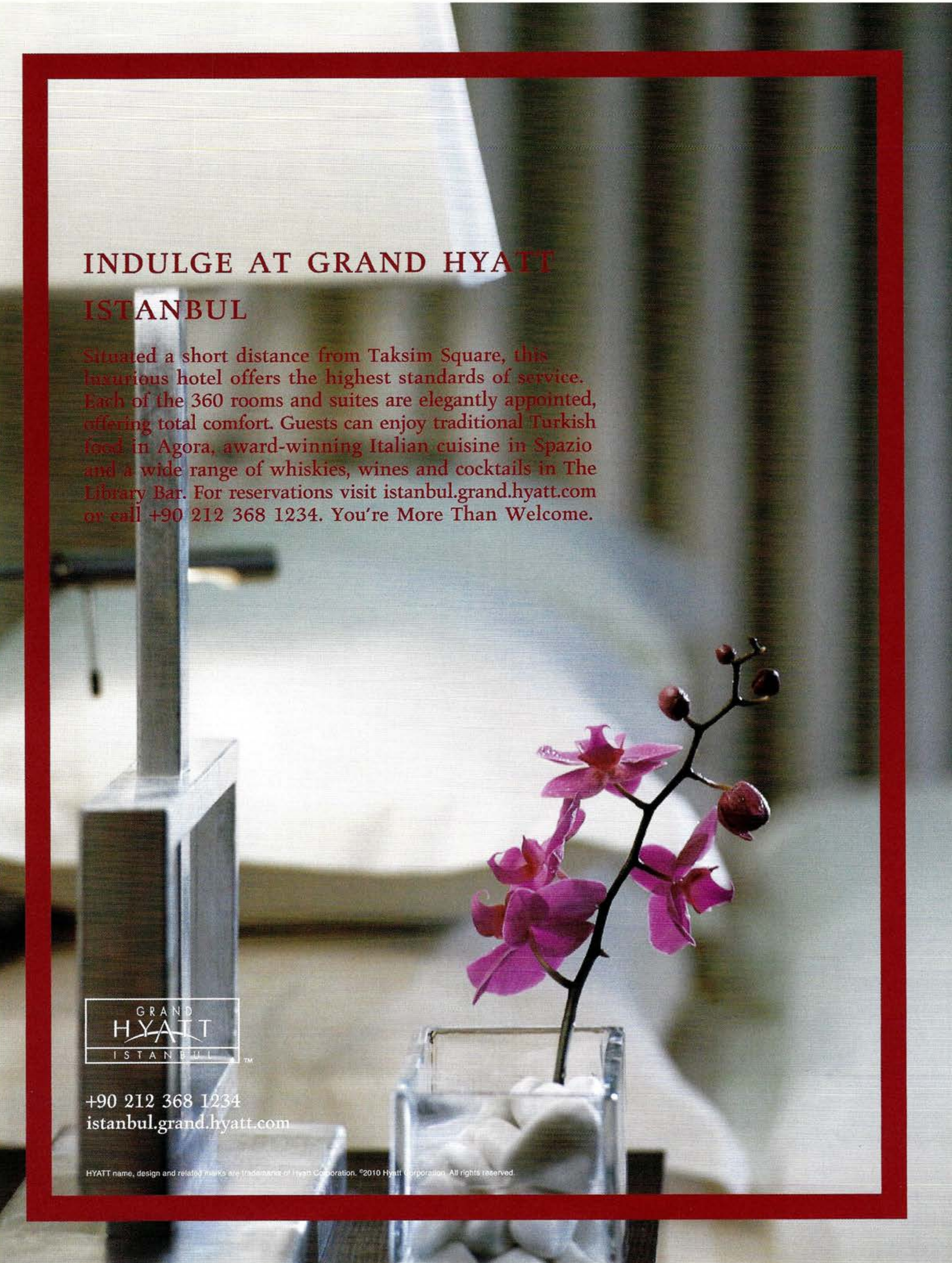

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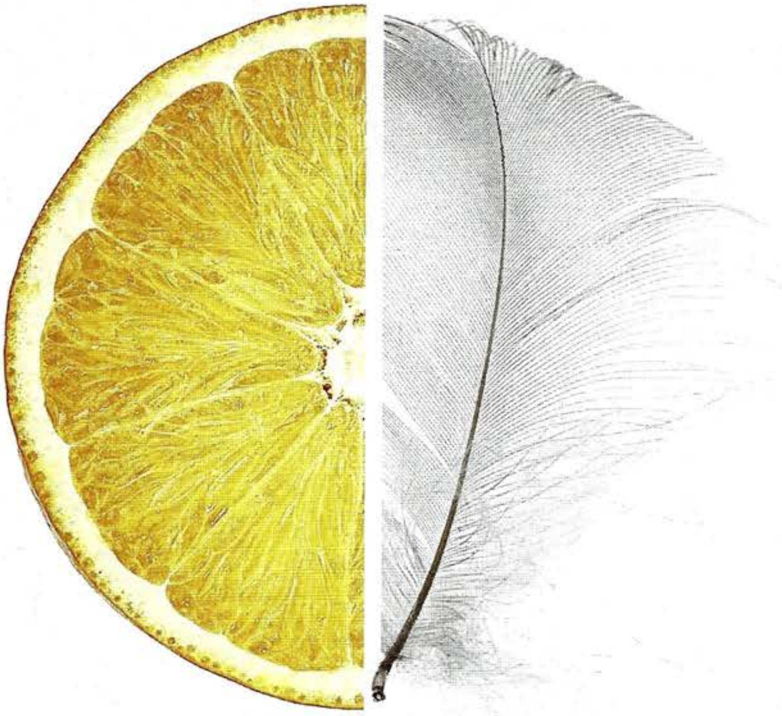

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BOOKS

A GALLOP THROUGH LIFE WITH THE GREATEST TRAVEL WRITER OF ALL TIME,
AN EYE FOR A RUIN, A SOLDIER'S HISTORY, AND READING CHRONICLES WITH A PINCH OF SALT

DINING WITH EVLIYA

Gerald MacLean

AN OTTOMAN TRAVELLER
Selections from the *Book of Travels* of Evliya Çelebi
Translated and edited by Robert Dankoff and Sooyong Kim, Eland, £25

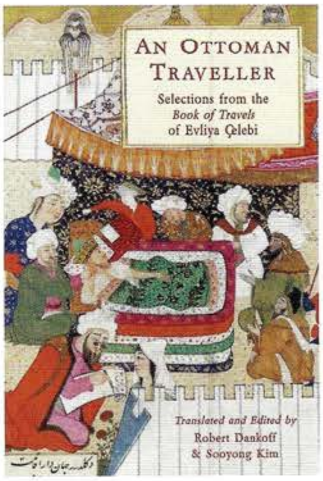
For far too long, Evliya Çelebi (1611–c1684) and his *Book of Travels* have been almost entirely unknown outside Turkey, and little read except by scholars. The publication of this wonderfully rich, lively selection from the ten volumes of Evliya's manuscript, in a clear, vigorous and atmospheric English translation, is sure to bring this monumental work the attention it deserves. Including an informative introduction, a useful guide to literary allusions, a glossary, several maps and a generous selection of full-colour illustrations, this is a beautiful book at a reasonable price that connoisseurs of Turkey will want to read and reread, and which deserves to find its way onto university reading lists.

Evliya Çelebi liked to eat. Born in Istanbul and raised at the court of Murad IV, he also liked to travel and do a lot of other things, as readers will quickly discover. Composed from notes kept during more than 40 years of journeys throughout imperial lands when the Ottoman Empire was at its most extensive, Evliya's often astonishing record opens up life in an era still little known and understood, and reveals a man fascinated by everything he saw.

He tells of spending 40 days with companions on summer pastures south of Sofia, "savouring the regional delights... trout that we caught in the lake and cooked in butter... milk and cream and yoghurt, curds and whey and buttermilk and beestings [the first milk a cow gives after calving] and cheeses, and butter-baked breads and pastries" and "fattening ourselves on roasted lamb".

Despite rumours to the contrary, we never did manage to procure a lamb for roasting while on the 2009 Evliya Çelebi Ride (see CORNUCOPIA 43), but I will never forget sampling all those other delicacies, as well as the "strawberries and chestnuts, wild pears, sour plums, medlars and rowan berries" that Evliya enjoyed. I recall how the local village-baked bread tasted marvellously different wherever we went, much as it must have done in his day. And I hope that Evliya, when he passed through Elmalı on the climb into the Domaniç Mountains, enjoyed a version of the exquisite *makarna* that we were served there, baked with butter and sprinkled with spicy chopped pieces of lamb cooked with garlic and parsley.

Evliya called himself "a wandering dervish and world traveller", which is to say that he was a pious Muslim with the inquiring, scientific mind characteristic of the era, as well as the broad and bawdy sense of fun of the wandering Sufi. Wherever he went, he sought out the company of dervishes, investigated local mysteries and recorded what he saw and heard. With documentary precision he catalogues cities, their population, economy and revenue. With an architect's eye he describes the beautiful bathhouses of Sofia and Bitlis. Piously he recollects his pilgrimage to Mecca and his visits to the tombs of Nasreddin Hoca and other saints. With zeal he records local legends, describes regional costumes and transcribes examples of regional dialects.


AN OTTOMAN TRAVELLER
Selections from the Book of Travels of Evliya Çelebi
Translated and Edited by Robert Dankoff & Sooyong Kim

Evliya was evidently "born to strange sights", in John Donne's phrase, and lovingly recounts miracles and feats of magic in exactly the same objective terms he uses to report natural wonders such as trees, flowers, mountains, rivers, crocodiles, snakes, elephants and monkeys. Of the magical displays that he assures us he witnessed, the shape-changing Bulgarian chicken-witch and the shamanic pissing displays of Molla Mehmed in Bitlis are among my favourites. He would also have us believe that he watched as a Kalmyk shaman performed an excremental ritual that caused a river "as broad and deep as the Golden Horn" to freeze over, allowing the Ottoman army to cross.

A Sufi with a scientific mind, Evliya was no simple mystic regaling readers with a series of unusual traveller's tales. Able to recite the Koran from memory, he was at once learned, witty and pious. In 1631 he dreamt that he saw "the holy Prophet in person" but "instead of begging him for intercession [*sefa'at*], by a slip of the tongue begged for travel [*seyahat*] instead." Amused, the Prophet granted him both. Some years later, returning home from a jaunt to Bursa, Evliya records how his father, who had not known or approved of the trip, dreamt that several saints appeared, instructing him to approve of his son's wanderings and to advise him to record all he saw "and call it Book of Travels". Evliya later tells how his father's ghost appeared to bless him on his final journey to Mecca in 1671.

There are times when his piety takes shocking turns. While travelling in the Morea (Peloponnese), he is surprised to be recognised by the daughter of an emir with whom he stayed some years before. On discovering she has become the captive wife of a local Greek "captain", and that she attends church "with her husband", his first thought is: "I ought to kill this cursed woman." She runs away at his approach, leaving him to lament the number of Muslims held captive. In an exciting section recounting his adventures riding with Tartar irregulars on raids into Western Europe, Evliya merrily describes slaughtering thousands of "infidel souls" while pillaging their villages of "splendid stuffs and rare textiles and countless lovely boys and girls". "Praise be to God," he declares after one of numerous such raids, "this humble one too got as my share three slave boys and three virgin maids, six wind-swift steeds, several gold-embroidered women's dresses and vests and silver coins".

He later advocates the summary execution of some brigands that he and his companions have captured, recording how "we made them kneel down and, in a single moment, with our sharpened swords, made their heads roll on the ground like polo balls and erased their inauspicious beings from the page of time". Yet his piety caused him to disapprove of the Safavid tradition of taking three days to torture criminals to death.

Evliya's account combines magical tales of a kind familiar from *The Thousand and One Nights* with storytelling traditions found among villagers and dervishes. He further blends these low topics with allusions to more elevated works, the Koran and Hadith, and Persian classics such as Firdawsi's *Book of Kings* and Sa'di's *Rose Garden*. His writing shows him steeped in the erotic metaphors of the Persian poets and adept at the witty word games of Ottoman court poetry. Like James Joyce in this and other respects, Evliya delighted in sexual puns and was fascinated by euphemisms and regional terms for human genitalia. "The traveller," he insists, "needs to know" certain "foolish expressions... since he might be the object of cursing," which, whether in the Albanian or Gypsy dialect, invariably involved what might happen to the sexual organs of family members.

Evliya's comments on the anchovies (*hamsi*) of Trabzon are a characteristic blend of aesthetic appreciation, scientific analysis, bawdiness and wordplay. "With regard to its properties," he writes, "it is first of all an elegant fish, about a span in length, rather purplish and shiny and plump. Its benefit is such that if a man eats it for seven days he will go to his wife and have his own 'fish' eaten seven times every night. It is very invigorating..." Such comments echo the idioms of Mevlana's celebrated Mesnevi tales, with their propensity for celebrating love in all manner of ways.

Turkey, with its magnificent landscapes and multi-layered history, its mixture of peoples and cultures, its natural wonders and splendid foods, has long attracted travellers and inspired generations of great writers, from Lady Mary Wortley Montagu and Lord Byron to Demetrius Cantemir and Jean de Thévenot, to Rose Macaulay and William Dalrymple. But Evliya Çelebi is the greatest of Ottoman travel writers, if not one of the greatest travel writers of his own or any other period. This is not only because of the geographical and historical range of his travels, and for the otherwise unavailable yet fascinating details of social life that he records, but also because – as Dankoff and Kim make evident – he wrote with great enthusiasm and vigour and knew how to tell a gripping story.

An Ottoman Traveller is offered to CORNUCOPIA subscribers at the special rate of £22.50, post-free

Gerald MacLean is the author of *Looking East: English Writing and the Ottoman Empire Before 1800* (Palgrave Macmillan)

Follow the project to retrace Evliya's footsteps across Anatolia, described in CORNUCOPIA 43, at http://hoofprinting.blogspot.com

FOR LOVE OF RUINS

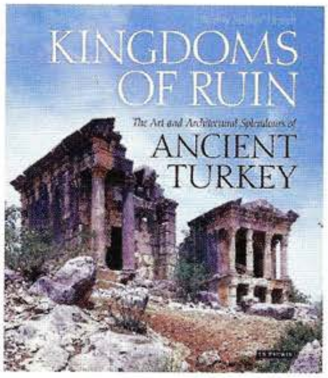
Rupert Scott

KINGDOMS OF RUIN The Art and Architectural Splendours of Ancient Turkey

By Jeremy Stafford-Deitsch
IB Tauris £29.95

IONIA, A QUEST

By Freya Stark
Tauris Books, £12.95



Jeremy Stafford-Deitsch's *Kingdoms of Ruin* at first glance appears to be the classic coffee-table book, destined for a ten-minute browse before consignment for eternity to the bookshelves. In fact it is a significant contribution to the genre of ruin literature, and its text is a match for its pictures. It includes an accomplished history of early Turkey, a superb photographic odyssey through some 75 ancient sites, and a very useful bibliography.

There is an intriguing first chapter titled "Significance in Ruins". This verges at times towards the pretentious (for instance, "there is significance in ruins because significance itself is ruined" or "ruins embody what modernity cannot" or "ruins embody the intuition that this world is not the whole story"). But perhaps a degree of pretension is inevitable in any general discussion around the question any ruin enthusiast must have asked themselves a hundred times, which is "why do I find these shattered stones of ancient civilisations so compelling and fascinating?"

Like every other author who has asked this question – from Rose Macaulay to J-J Rousseau – he fails to come up with a good or concise answer, but I found the discussion thought-provoking. He believes ruins can induce a temporary insanity because "contemplated in solitude, such ruins defy the aesthetic categories of scale, harmony, order and beauty on which sanity depends". He finds beauty in their disorder. They provoke an intoxicating feeling of discovering the Sublime, although he cannot be precise about what exactly the Sublime is. This is the outpouring of a cultivated, well-travelled author/photographer entirely captivated by his subject.

His photographs, for me, are most successful in detailed shots – for instance, of an upended cornice block from Termessus or of the great neo-Hittite relief from Ivriz. He has great feeling for the texture of rock and an eye for detail. But I would have enjoyed a little mood and drama and more pictures that place the ruins in the landscape that surrounds them.

Ionia: A Quest was first published in 1954, when Freya Stark was 61, the first of her trio of Turkish travel books written though the 1950s. My own favourite from the trilogy is *The Lycian Shore* of 1956, which includes a magical description of a journey on a small *gulet* from Izmir to Antalya, visiting many ancient sites en route.

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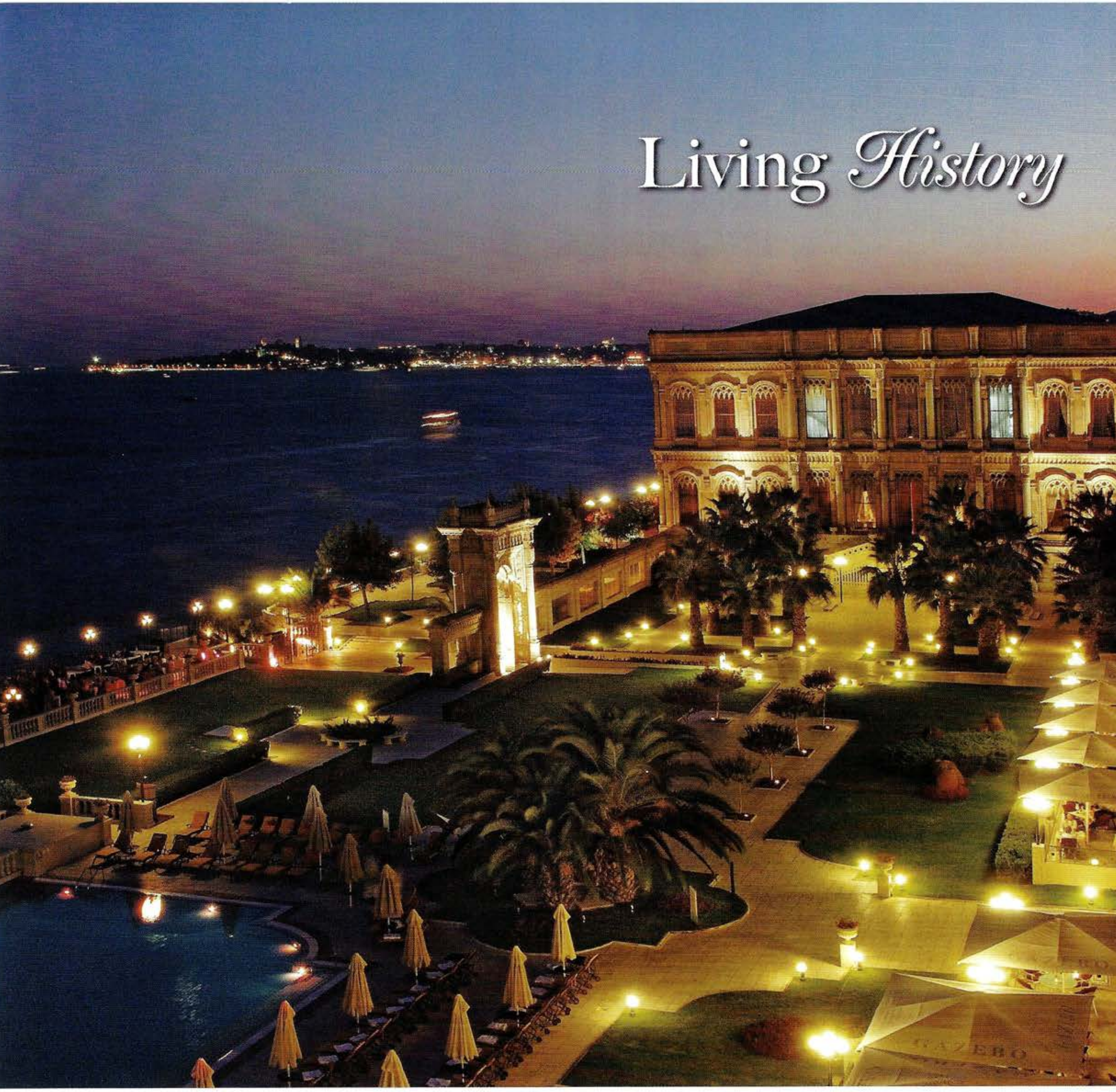

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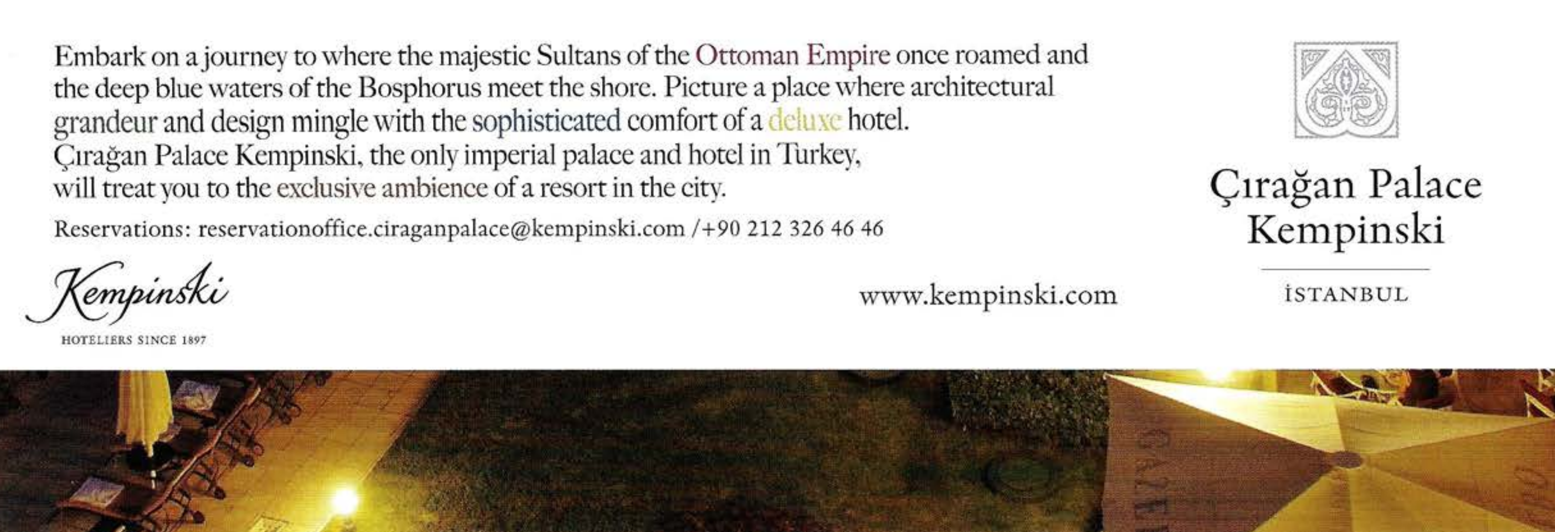


In *Ionia: A Quest* you feel that she is still experimenting with a format that interweaves descriptions of the contemporary world with long digressions into ancient history. "Following Herodotus" is used to provide a rather tenuous thread to a tour of the many ancient cities of Ionia and Caria, using Izmir (invariably called "Smyrna") as a base. From her published letters written at this time, it is clear that she was learning Turkish and absorbing great quantities of ancient history while writing the book.

Much of this ancient history is reproduced in the book, and I confess that I find it hard work to read. Freya Stark's gift was not for historical narrative but for bringing alive the present. If her ancient history can be leaden, her descriptive writing is intensely vivid. She uses short sentences and at times gets rather closer to poetry than prose. She captures snapshots both of contemporary Turkish life around her and of the ancient places she visits. Her descriptions of exploring Heracleia, for instance, or of a Yörük camel train she passes near Denizli, make the hairs stand up on your neck.

Southwest Turkey in the early 1950s was changing rapidly and beginning to emerge from the traumas of the Population Exchange 30 years earlier. New highways were being built, tractors were replacing oxen, electricity was transforming the life of villages. But many towns were still half-abandoned, the Maeander river delta was still largely undrained, and hotels were very basic. Ancient cities such as Aphrodisias or Heracleia were unexcavated, and they were all unvisited. She meets only one tourist in her tour of all the ancient sites.

It is Freya Stark's description of these things that makes *Ionia: A Quest* so interesting to read now, almost 60 years on, when the world she describes has changed so much.

Rupert Scott's anthology of travel writing, *Turkish Coast Through Writers' Eyes*, is published by Eland at £12.95.

To order books online, visit cornucopia.net/bookspage.html

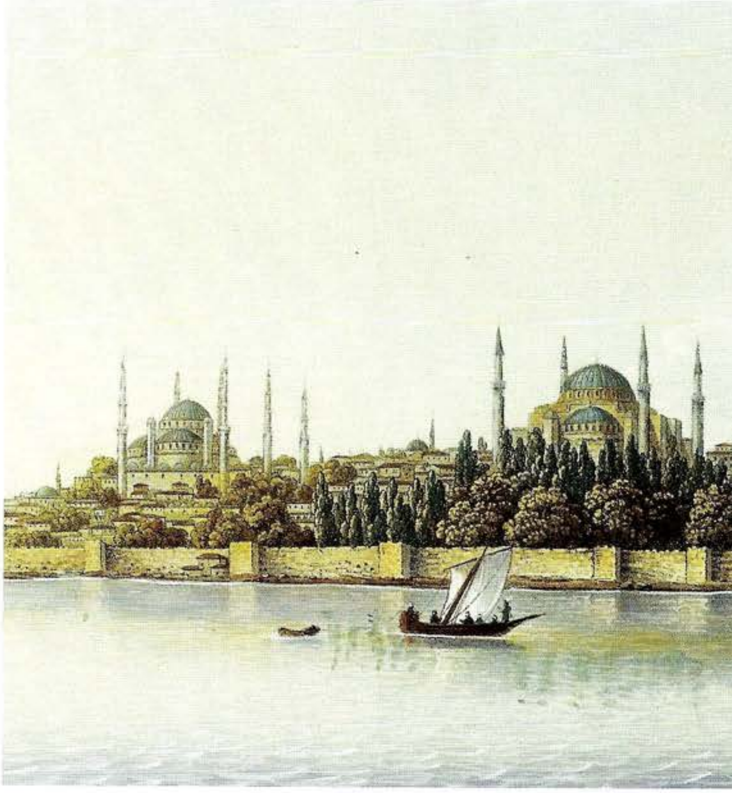
EXQUISITE ENGRAVINGS OF ISTANBUL

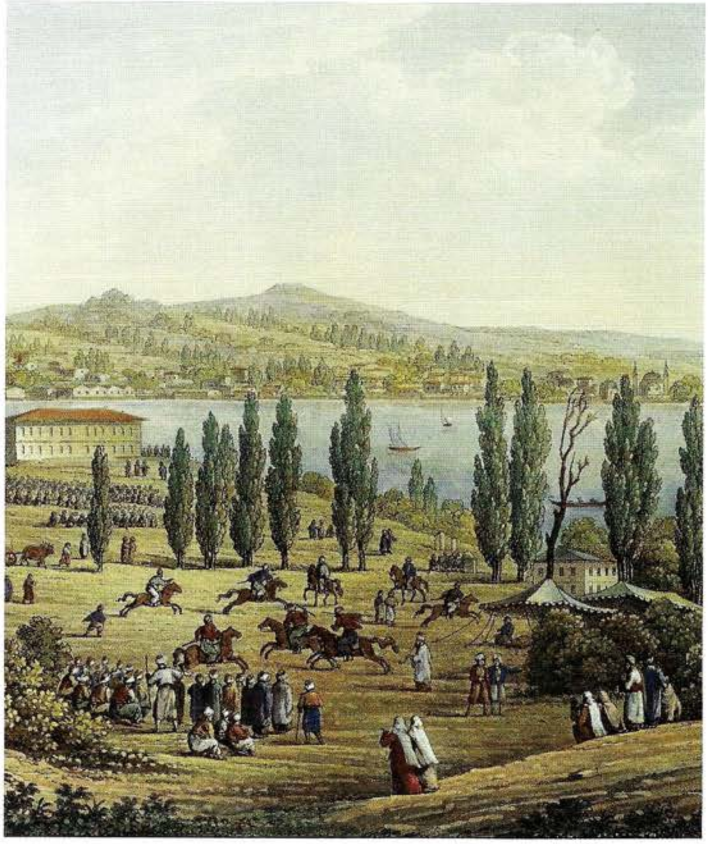
ATLAS DES PROMENADES PITTORESQUES DANS CONSTANTINOPLE ET SUR LES RIVES DU BOSPHORE

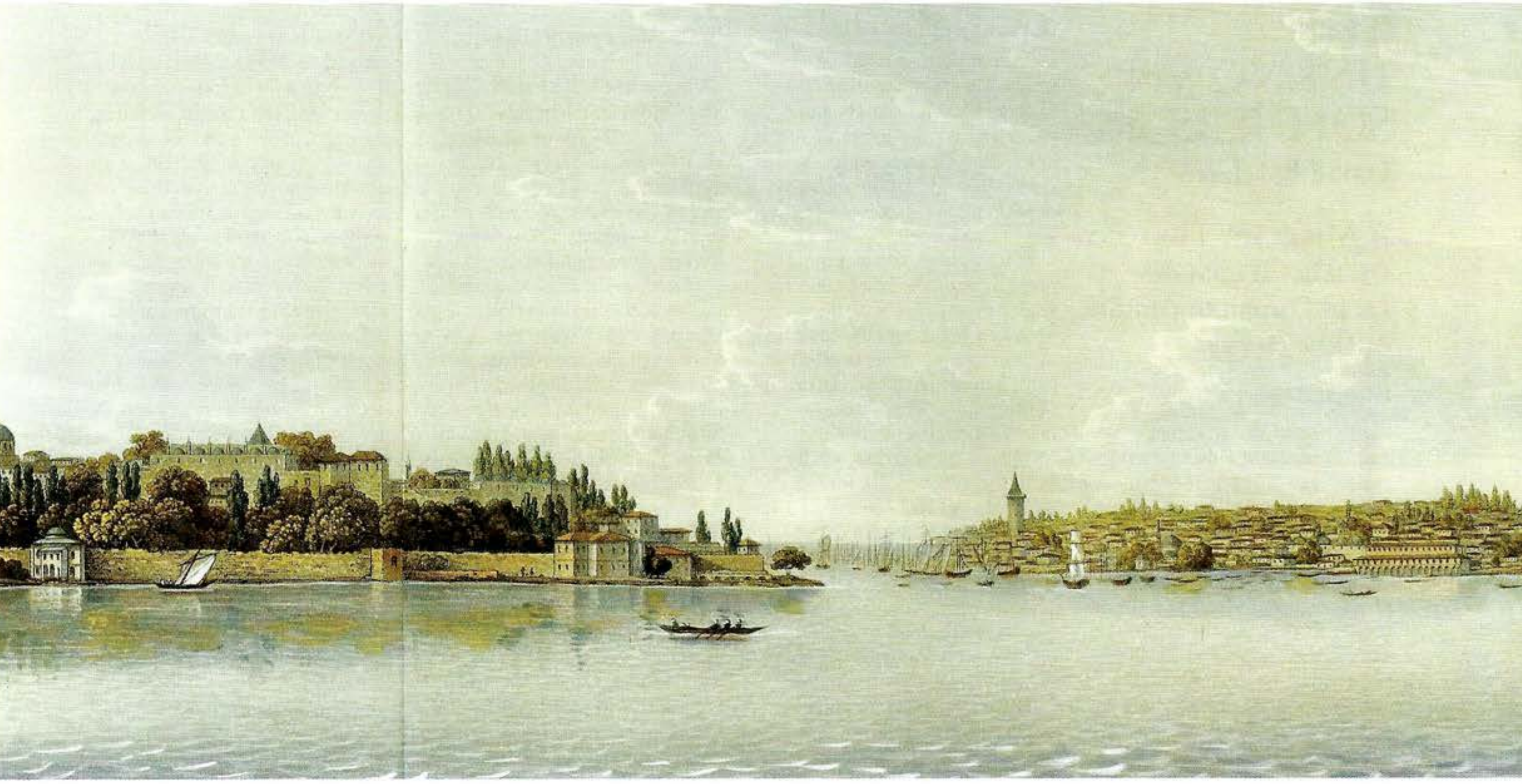
By Charles Pertusier, with plates engraved by Benedict Piringer after the drawings of Michel-François Préault
H Nicolle, Paris, 1817

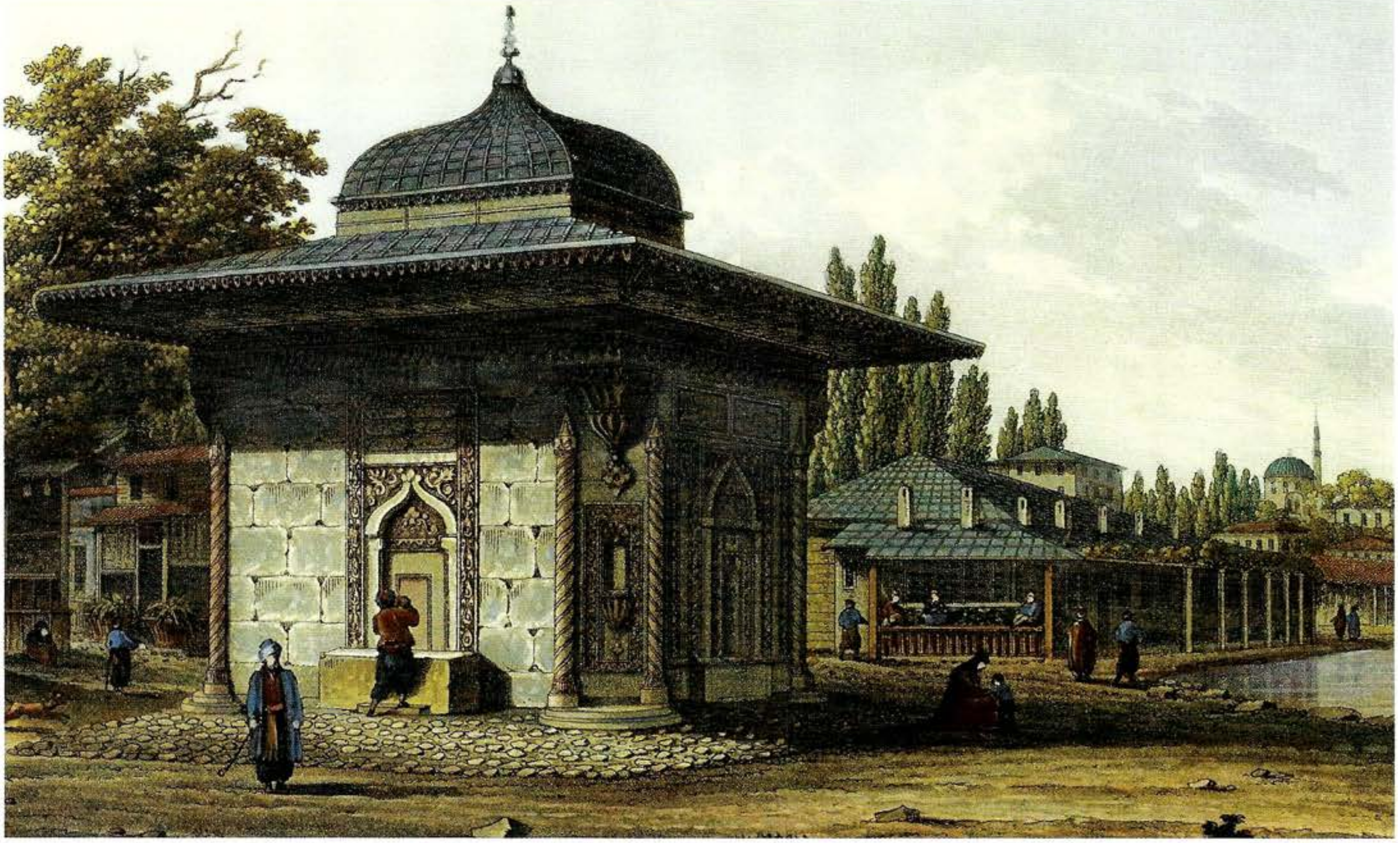
Travel, Atlases, Maps and Natural History Auction, Sotheby's London, Nov 4
Estimate £15,000–20,000

Coming up for auction in November is this exceptional folio-sized book of hand-coloured engravings depicting Istanbul in the 19th century. The author, Charles Pertusier, had been aide-de-camp to the French ambassador to the Ottoman Empire from 1811 to 1814, and his "Atlas of Picturesque Promenades in Constantinople and on the Banks of the Bosphorus" includes 25 stunning autumnal aquatints – four of them over two pages, such as the view of Topkapı Palace from the sea (top). The engravings are based on drawings by Michel-François Préault, who was an architect employed by the reforming sultan Mahmud II to design the precursors of the neoclassical army and navy barracks that now dominate the districts of Maçka and Taksim. One intriguing view (right) shows horsemen playing jereed in the park at Maçka before the building of Dolmabahçe Palace. Dolmabahçe translates as "reclaimed gardens" – and you can see the gardens after which it was named at the bottom of the hill. Ahmed III's fountain on the Asian shore in Üsküdar (far right) was built in 1728, in the heyday of Ottoman Baroque.









THE UNKNOWN SOLDIERS

David Barchard

A Military History of the Ottomans
From Osman to Atatürk

By Mesut Uyar and Edward J Erickson
Praeger, $59.95

Lord Curzon, rather unflatteringly, said that the Turks were a nation of private soldiers. But drop the "private" and many Turks, until very recently, would have agreed with him. Considering the prominence of the army in Turkish society throughout the country's history, it is surprising how little substantial history has been written about it – leaving books on "civil-military relations" to one side. Now the gap has been filled with this fine account by Mesut Uyar and Edward J Erickson. It helps that both men have a military background themselves. Colonel Uyar is not only a military historian, but also a serving officer in the Turkish army with something most historians these days do not have: plenty of active service experience.

In fewer than 300 action-packed pages, the book takes the reader from the very earliest Ottoman fighting units, described as "a steppe nomadic cavalry force", up to 1919 and the death of the empire, when "almost overnight, regiment after regiment... changed its loyalty from the sultan to the Turkish nationalist cause". This is an aspect of the establishment of the republic that is usually overlooked. By the end, the Turkish army, though battered and impoverished, had for several decades been a modern army organised along European lines.

The book covers the classical age of Ottoman military supremacy and the conquest of Anatolia, the Arab Middle East, North Africa and the Balkans, followed by a long period of decline after the mid-17th century. The Ottoman military were technologically resourceful long after the rest of Turkish society appeared to have frozen in time, and by the 1730s the first attempts to import military science from Europe were taking place.

However, the largest section of the book covers the period between 1826 – when the traditional Ottoman forces, the Janissaries, were disposed of in a blaze of grapeshot, to be replaced by a modern army – and the end of the First World War. Throughout this time, military collapse and partition seemed imminent, and the non-Turkish provinces of the empire were peeled away in a series of military defeats. But the military reforms – and the officer corps they produced – were sufficient to enable Atatürk and his fellow officers to win the War of Independence and create modern Turkey. This account focuses both on the close-up details of military history – how battles and campaigns were fought, and why they were won or lost – and on deeper long-term issues, including shortages of skills and resources, and sultans who often spent more time designing uniforms than working on organisation. The authors write damningly that the earliest period of reform, 1826 to 1853, "was probably more valuable for the Ottoman military in the destruction of its antique institutions than for any long-lasting changes which emerged".

One recurrent tendency was for newly created corps of army officers to see themselves as guardians of society. At the time of the Young Turk revolution, the officer corps became convinced of the wisdom of an enlightened military dictatorship.

The English occasionally falters, but this account is written with intelligence, verve and a very deep knowledge of Ottoman history. It is a book to which military historians, as well as students of the Ottoman world, will surely return to again and again. ◆

History in the Making Caroline Finkel

Essays on Ottoman Historians and Historiography

By Rhoads Murphey
Eren, Istanbul, TL30

Rereading this collection, I am reminded of how casually we modern historians of the Ottoman world exploit the "chronicles" that supply the story line of events. We tend to mine them for information to flesh out a narrative, or to provide background to an incident imperfectly glimpsed in other sources. Rhoads Murphey has examined the historical writings of the Ottoman middle period with a beadier eye than most, and he persuasively suggests how to reach a more nuanced understanding of these important texts.

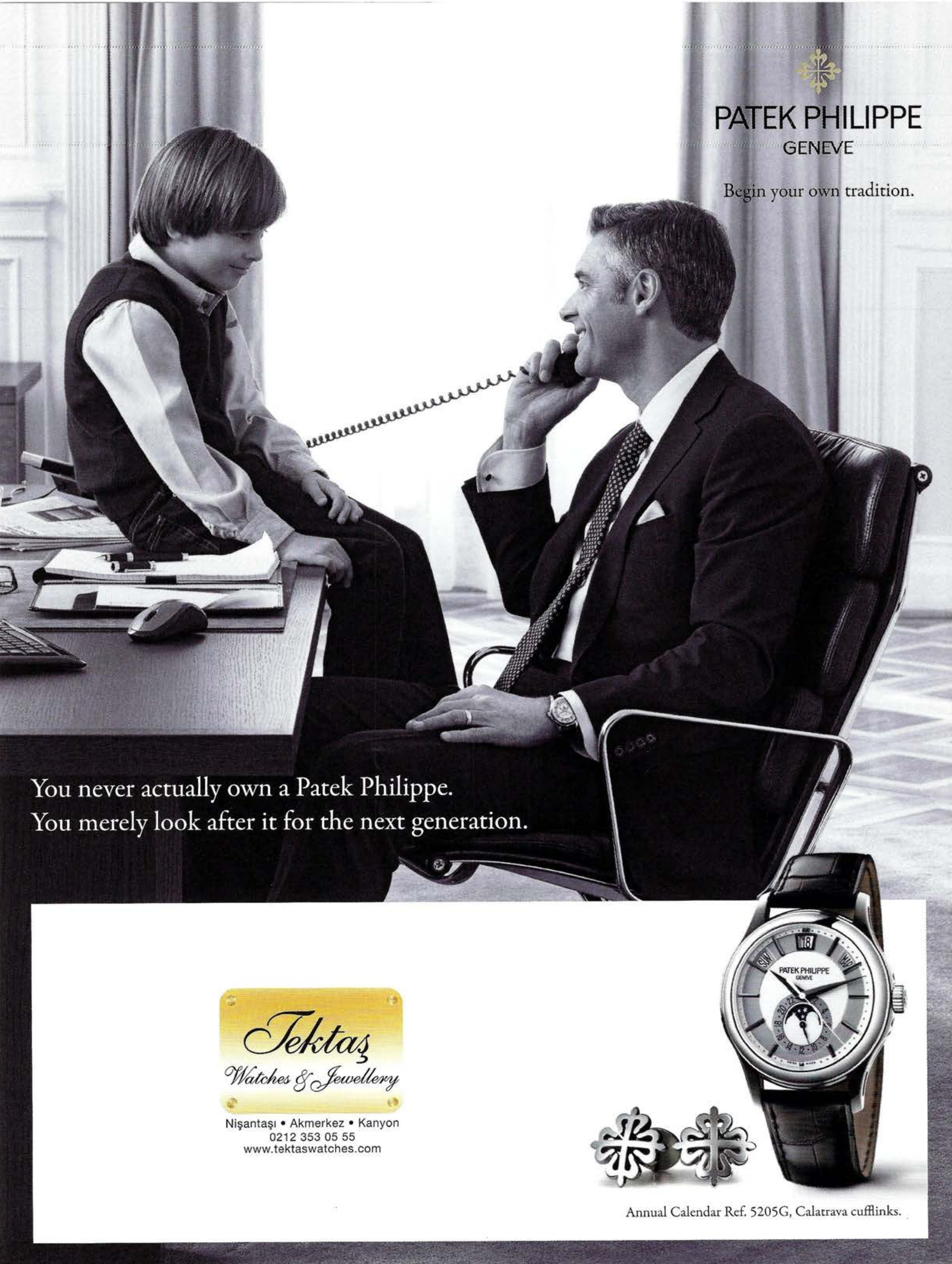
The dangers of relying solely on any one chronicle become evident when we consider that contemporary historians may give rather different versions of an event. Five accounts of the events that led to the deposition of Ibrahim I in 1648 illustrate the point. The senior cleric Karaçelebizade played a part in Ibrahim's removal and was concerned to exonerate himself and other clerics: he pins blame for the parlous state of affairs that presaged the sultan's removal on viziers and court favourites. Solakzade, a personal attendant of the sultan, blames viziers and clerics for turning a blind eye to corruption. Mehmed Halife, a member of the sultan's household staff, fingers the clerics, holding them responsible for the guidance of the state. The famous intellectual Kâtib Çelebi holds culpable all those who approved corrupt policies contravening religious law or accepted custom. Written slightly later, but based on a contemporary source, the message of the historian Naima was that only the impeccable example of those at the top could ensure that the ship of state sailed smoothly.

Today's readers need also be aware of the self-serving cant that historians of former times indulged in to ingratiate themselves with their often royal patrons. Mustafa Safi's work extols the young sultan Ahmed I, ascribing to him the attributes of the ideal ruler. Ahmed was no doubt delighted. But Murphey points out that Mustafa Safi was writing within a tradition of laudatory prose with its roots in medieval historiography, and his flattery is to be understood in this context.

The communications between Murad IV and his officials illustrate the conflicting interests at the heart of government. Besides the matters of policy and administration in which Murad took a personal interest was the protocol of gift exchange. When his grand vizier offered him a "broken-down hack" instead of a chestnut mare that had taken his fancy, the royal ire was up. One grand vizier failed to observe diplomatic niceties while greeting the Crimean khan, the historian Mustafa Ali writes, exposing him "to the indignity of a public banquet in which superior and lesser ranks mixed indiscriminately". The khan took umbrage and refused to provide the military co-operation the Ottomans sought.

Many narrative sources are not just unanalysed, but also unpublished. Murphey warns us that a more complete judgment on many aspects of Ottoman history must await the publication of this body of evidence. A new generation is now hard at work to rectify this situation, and we can only hope they persist. ◆

Caroline Finkel is the author of *Osman's Dream: The Story of the Ottoman Empire 1300–1923* (John Murray, £12.99)



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Arts Diary

SOUNDS AND VISIONS

Thomas Roueché

It isn't every day that a Habsburg princess jets into Istanbul to unveil an architectural folly cum sound installation. But in May, Francesca von Habsburg, an important figure in contemporary art, descended on the city with a large black spiky structure to grace Eminönü Square. *The Morning Line*, designed by the artist Matthew Ritchie, acted as a centrepiece for a week of performances by an impressive line-up of sound artists both local and international. The torrential rain at the opening did little to dampen spirits.

The opening of Arter – the "art space" İstiklâl Caddesi has been waiting for – has upped the ante. Access to the "space for art" is at the bottom of a steep incline, which made its navigation in high heels a difficult feat, to the amusement of those less encumbered. Starter, the opening show, features a lifesize tank that inflates and deflates at regular intervals.

A night later and it was Rampa – a huge white block sunk deep under a Migros supermarket in Beşiktaş – with a fantastic Cengiz Çekil retrospective. Çekil, a prominent figure in Turkish art since the 1970s, conjures with the everyday and utilitarian: workmen's jackets were hung like ikat kaftans on the bare white wall of the gallery, stark in their simplicity.

At Rodeo, across the road from Istanbul Modern, Sylvia Kouvali balances a strong presence at international art fairs with important local shows, and mixes local, regional and international artists. This autumn she will be at Artforum in Berlin and Frieze in London, presenting shows by the Greek artist Eftihis Patsourakis and the British artist Mark Aerial Waller respectively.

In Berlin, Tanas, the international outpost of the Vehbi Koç Foundation, does much to promote Turkish art: 2009–10 saw three major exhibitions of work from Istanbul in the city. Berlin's real star attraction, however, is the newly opened Neues Museum. The 19th-century structure and the 20th-century damage have been maintained to create a sublime work of art. Damaged frescoes are neither restored nor erased but are kept as fragments. The columns remain pockmarked with bullet holes. This is architecture with history as frighteningly contemporary art.

The move of the Museum of Islamic Art into the north wing of Berlin's Pergamon Museum in 2019 will dramatically change the use of space in the building and bring a great deal out of storage. Stephan Weber, the charismatic new director, has promised the reconstruction of entire houses from the ruins of Samarra.

To return to Anatolia, perhaps the most fascinating manifestation of Turkish art today was at the modest but charming Mardin Biennial. Against the backdrop of the hot, sandy city was something thought-provoking, absurd and beautiful. On the opening night, the Berlin-based performance artist Nezaket Ekici stood in the centre of the 16th-century Kasimiye Medrese with eight female collaborators on a set of pedestals. Like modern Dianas of Ephesus, they squirted water from breast-like pouches on their dresses into the pool at the centre of the atrium. The assembled municipal bureaucracy were not a little bemused. But as the sun went down it was hard not to be awed by the beauty of Turkey's ever-present contradictions, and by the simple beauty of a neon sculpture on the side of an ancient house that was lit as the farmers on the Mesopotamian plain began to light their fires. ◆

For details and links, www.cornucopia.net/istanbulartsdiary

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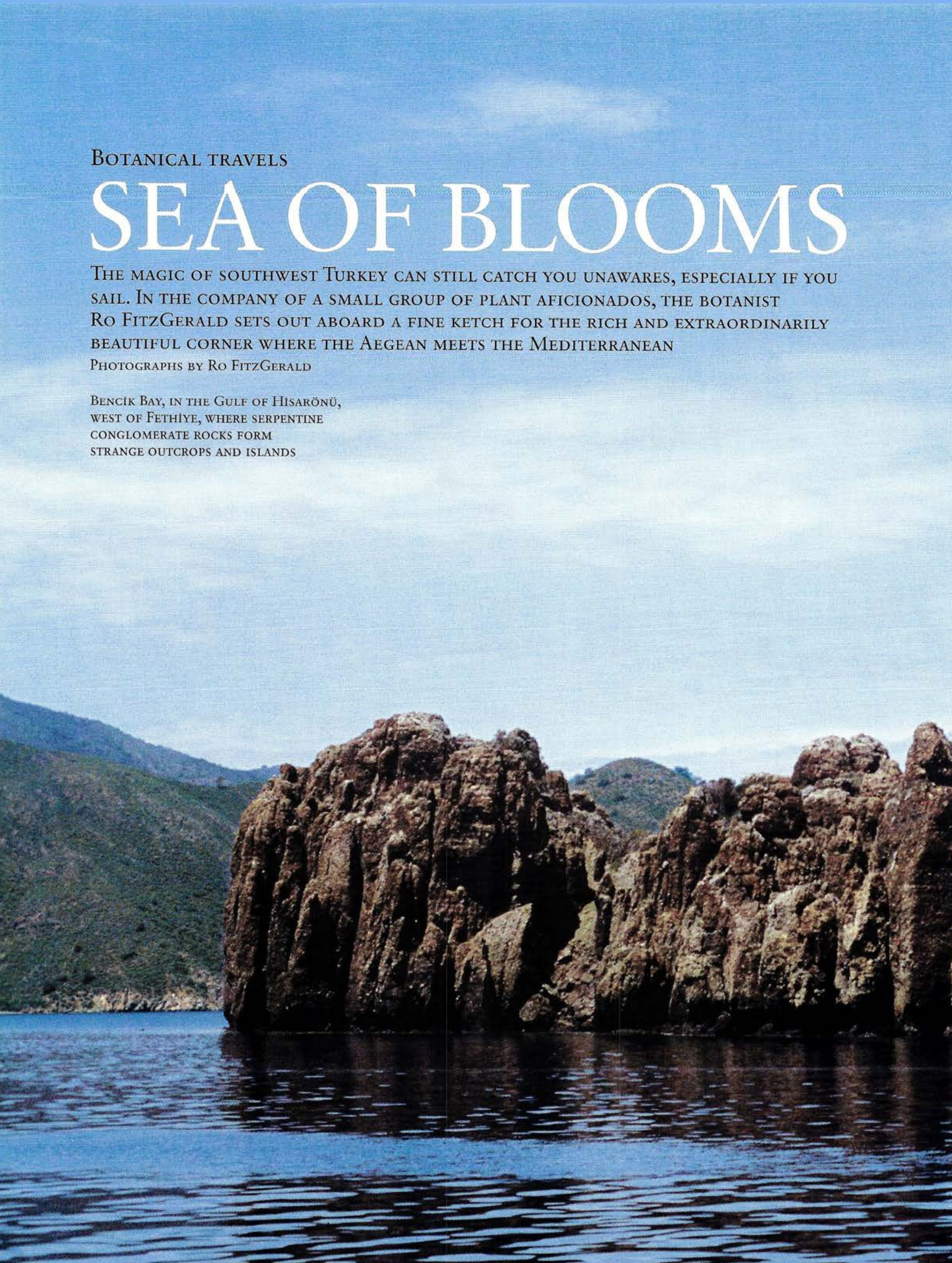
Botanical travels

SEA OF BLOOMS

The magic of southwest Turkey can still catch you unawares, especially if you sail. In the company of a small group of plant aficionados, the botanist Ro FitzGerald sets out aboard a fine ketch for the rich and extraordinarily beautiful corner where the Aegean meets the Mediterranean

Photographs by Ro FitzGerald



Bencİk Bay, in the Gulf of Hİsarönü, west of Fethİye, where serpentine conglomerate rocks form strange outcrops and islands

Annual yellow chrysanthemums and pinkish-purple mallows among the Carian stone acanthus leaves of Cnidus

Much important botanical work has to be done in quite dreary places, and often in lousy weather. Luckily, botanists are easily pleased. Cracks in pavements, weedy airport flowerbeds, building sites, road verges seen from traffic jams – all kinds of ugly places can be interesting habitats. And as we are used to getting our modest kicks from unpromising material, a chance to look at classy plants in beautiful places is truly wonderful. I have been visiting Turkey whenever possible since 1990, to botanise with the CORNUCOPIA contributor Andy Byfield while he was studying the Important Plant Areas (IPAS, now with a published register) and their incredibly rich and fascinating flora.

Turkey's key position between Europe and Asia, well known in art history, is also true for its plants and gives botanising there a glamour and mystery well beyond the satisfaction of lists of Latin names. In such a huge country there is always the lure of new species to be found, and for British botanists such as myself even quite common Turkish plant communities are not quite the same as at home, being both familiar and utterly strange in this liminal zone between West and East.

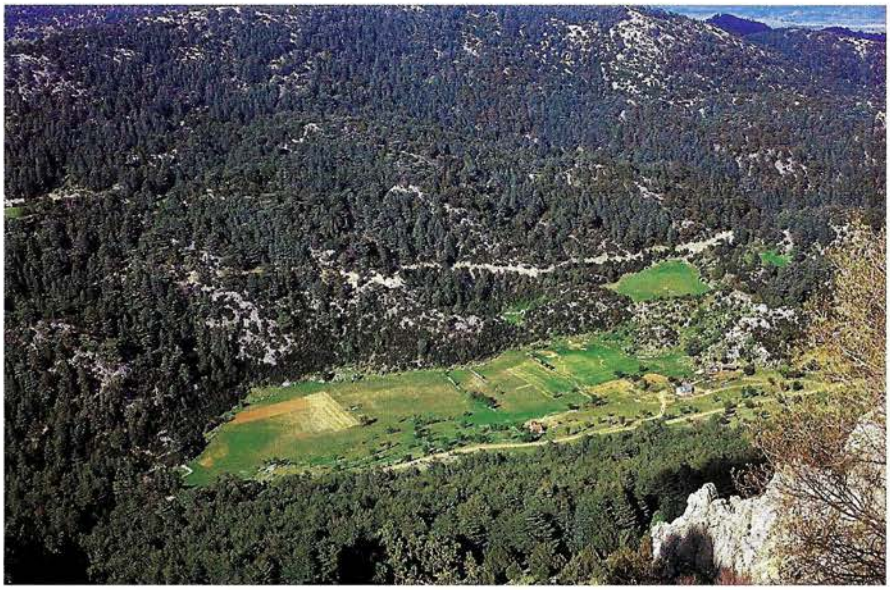
Geographically my former visits had been quite limited, though enough to make me love and dream about the country, to want to see and know more. So this chance to turn the corner from the Aegean coast into the Mediterranean was irresistible, and travelling by boat – on the beautiful Ariva 1 – for five days sounded fun. I was unprepared, though, for the intense element of wonder that this method of travel provided. Turkey has always seemed a palimpsest – geological and human history overlaid with always another layer to try to see through – and the boat itself proved to be the first and most essential of these transforming filters. I had been told Ariva 1 was a *gulet* (similar to the French *golette*, meaning schooner), one of the traditional coastal sailing boats of southwest Turkey, mostly powered by diesel now and converted to carry tourists. I'd imagined a rather dumpy vessel like the converted Brixham trawler sailed by my stepfather in Scotland.

Kaptan Günay, who looked after us on board, assisted by his family/crew, told us that, though traditionally built, Ariva 1 is really a ketch, rather than a *gulet*, but regardless of terminology the beauty of the boat – broad-beamed, buxom, with tall masts and a glorious sweeping bow – was a daily pleasure. Swimming under bow or stern, watching ripples reflected on her smooth wooden curves, was always entrancing, but the boat also gave us a direct connection with history.

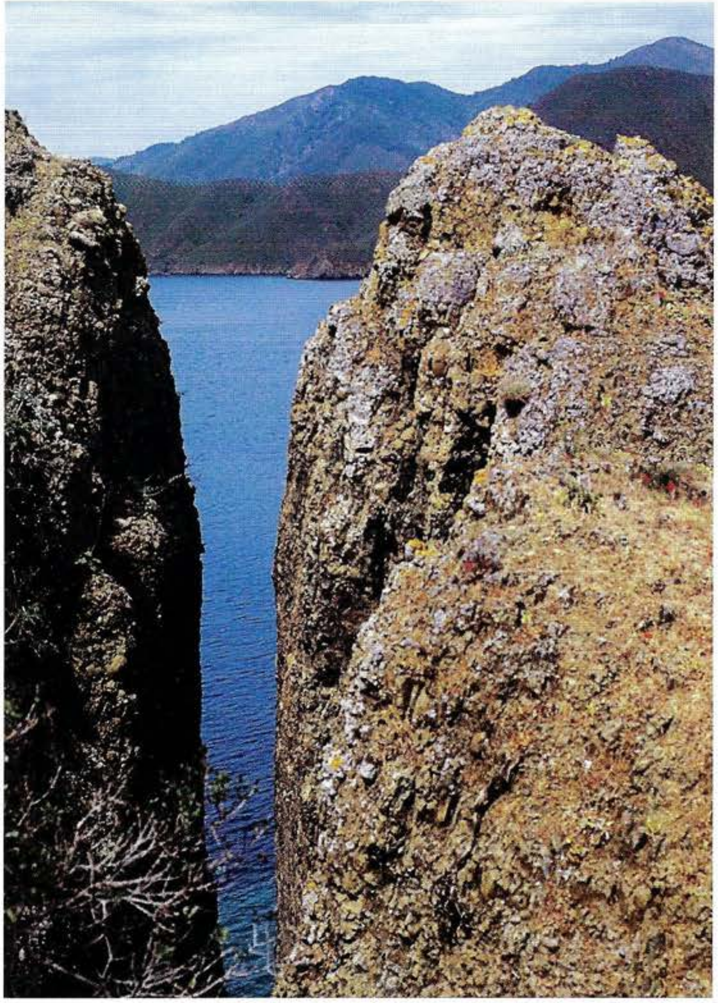
We travelled between Yalıkavak and Fethiye, and as soon as we had passed the construction sites blotching the coast of the Bodrum peninsula, it was obvious the sea had been, and still was, the only way to reach much of this dramatically craggy coast, with its cliffs and strange rock formations dropping straight into the sea, hiding occasional small bays that look accessible from land only by abseiling. To watch from the modern comfort of the cushioned stern as each fascinating new rockscape appeared was to see this coast as it had been seen since prehistory – without the dreaded separation of a tour-bus window.

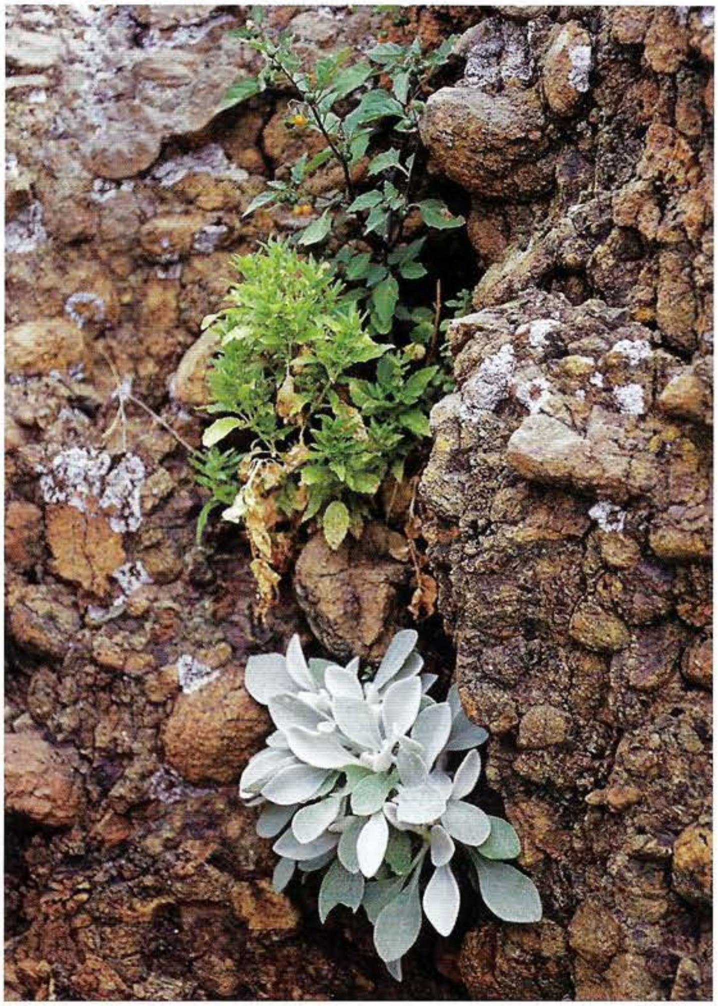
Turning the corner at the end of the Datça peninsula, where a modern shingle bar joins headland to mainland, linking the two harbours of the Carian city Cnidus (the Dorian Hexapolis), was quite a moment. We moored in the southern (Mediterranean) anchorage, with the Aegean water of the northern harbour visible only yards away. Cnidus is reputedly wonderfully healthy, the crew told us, situated as it is where the winds of the two seas meet. On a mellow afternoon it was also extraordinarily beautiful. Carian stonework is superb (as at Labraunda, CORNUCOPIA 43, 2010), and here both limestone and a beautiful, fine-grained creamy stone are used.

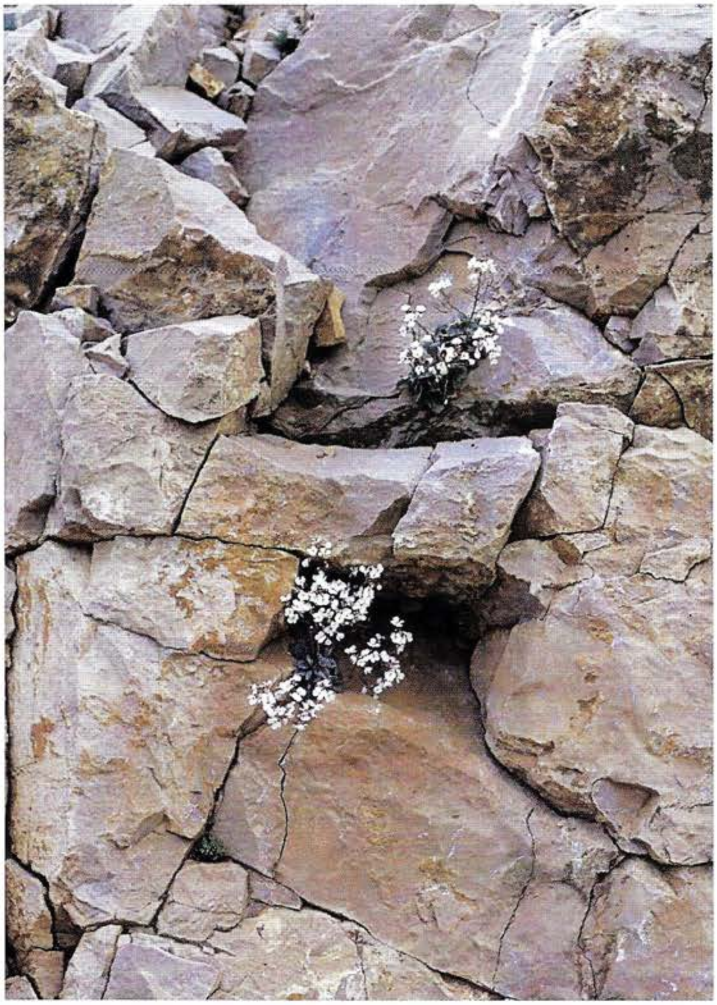
Much of the archaeological site has visible structures. On the mainland the remains are of grand civic and religious buildings; on the headland's inner slopes – quieter, shadier, less exposed – are the villas of the rich, and here the stones are sometimes cut in beautiful octagonal shapes. The kind guardian let us wander after hours, so we had the best of an experience still possible in Turkey, meandering almost alone among carved stones half-hidden in wild flowers. Returning to Mediterranean vegetation after time away from it is always a pleasure, for it engages all the senses. Of course, "aromatic scents" and "humming insects" have become travel clichés, but in Cnidus there is a particularly delicious-smelling *Origanum*, flitted over by an extraordinary insect – part dragonfly, part butterfly, with gauzy black wings with large jade spots. It turned out to be *Nemoptera sinuata*, the thread-winged lacewing, but even that clunking name couldn't spoil the magic. On the shore



LEFT IN THE CEDAR FORESTS OF MENDOS DAĞI, AN ISOLATED NATURAL HOLLOW IN THE LIMESTONE KARST HAS BEEN CULTIVATED
OPPOSITE, TOP RARE PLANTS, INCLUDING A LOVELY SILVER-LEAVED CAMPION, GROW MAGICALLY IN CREVICES IN THE DIZZY ROCKSCAPE OF BENCİK THAT THE GROUP DUBBED THE LEDGE O' DEATH
BELOW ÖLÜ DENİZ SEEN FROM THE SUMMIT OF BABA DAĞI, NOW A FAVOURITE WITH PARAGLIDERS AND EASY TO REACH







grew a plant whose name has a classical ring appropriate to such a setting: *Matthiola sinuata* – the great sea stock.

Next day, after going ashore to a pine-clad pass above the almond orchards of Datça, we slipped along the coast. Botanising from moving vehicles is a popular challenge, and binoculars were already in good use by the time the cliffs and slopes, limestone up till now, took on the red tones and smoother angles of serpentine. This is the stretch of coast where recently discovered populations of one of Europe's rarest, most distinguished trees were thought to be. *Phoenix theophrasti,* the Cretan date palm, was formerly only known from a few places in Crete. Named after Theophrastus (371–287BC), sometimes known as the Father of Botany, it is a thrillingly decorative plant, having a classic palm silhouette, but with silver, orange and blue tones where light touches its fronds. It grows where fresh water is available, so binoculars scoured the gullies cutting down the serpentine slopes. After many "Is it? Isn't it?" moments it became clear that an exciting number of gullies had healthy groups, and we swam ashore for a closer look. Date palms are among the most ancient plant species associated with man, and this one, with its tiny global populations locked in this inner corner of the Mediterranean, its little-known history in Turkey and its beauty highlighted by the evening sun, raised frissons of excitement.

Our evening mooring was in a deep inlet near Bencik, where the more undulating serpentine slopes sprout spectacular baroque shapes. Passing the gaunt shape of an unfinished giant hotel, the shores became wooded and the intense spring green of another rare Turkish endemic tree could be seen: *Liquidamber orientalis*, the oriental sweet gum, known only from this area of Turkey and in Rhodes – as botanists say, "one of the most restricted trees on Earth". As the light went, the boat passed small islands with occasional bent pines, their outlines like a Japanese print.

But before thoughts could get too precious, more earthly events intervened: Kaptan Günay rowed off in the dinghy and within seconds had dramatically speared an octopus. He disappeared into the bushes by the shore, where we could hear him scuffling, and reappeared with a carrier bag stuffed with thin green shoots. The common Mediterranean creeper *Smilax aspera*, with its savage thorns, frequently causes pain to unwary botanists, but it is related to asparagus, so we were elated to be shown this haul of *Smilax* shoots (*sılcan* or *diken otu* in Turkish). Cooked with eggs, they were delicious – revenge makes a fine seasoning.

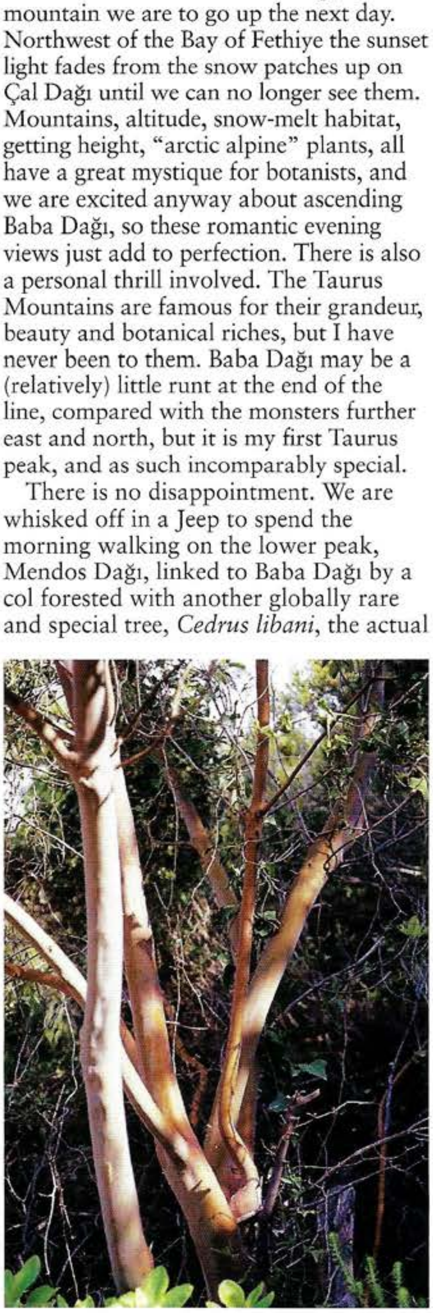
Food on board was always delicious, with fresh treats from Datça and Fethiye markets cooked by Cousin Levent, master of the cheese *börek*. For our first day, Nergis had brought giant *bayrampaşa* artichokes from Istanbul. She insisted we drink a glass of the cooking water, "for health", which caused groans and grimaces but tastes like pure essence of artichoke – so long as you keep your eyes shut.

"Serpentine conglomerate" was the key to the next morning, when we landed on one of the islands, a jumble of bizarre rock shapes and dizzy crevices. Occasionally used for grazing (a lone goat peered at us from a small cave), the habitat looked ferociously unwelcoming. But somehow weeds had arrived with the goat, and there were poppies and yellow daisies scattered on the slopes, while rarer plants miraculously flourished in almost invisible crevices, and a pretty pale-pink wild hollyhock contrasted with the fierce rocks where we dared each other to look over a sheer drop we christened the Ledge o' Death for the Irish members of our party.

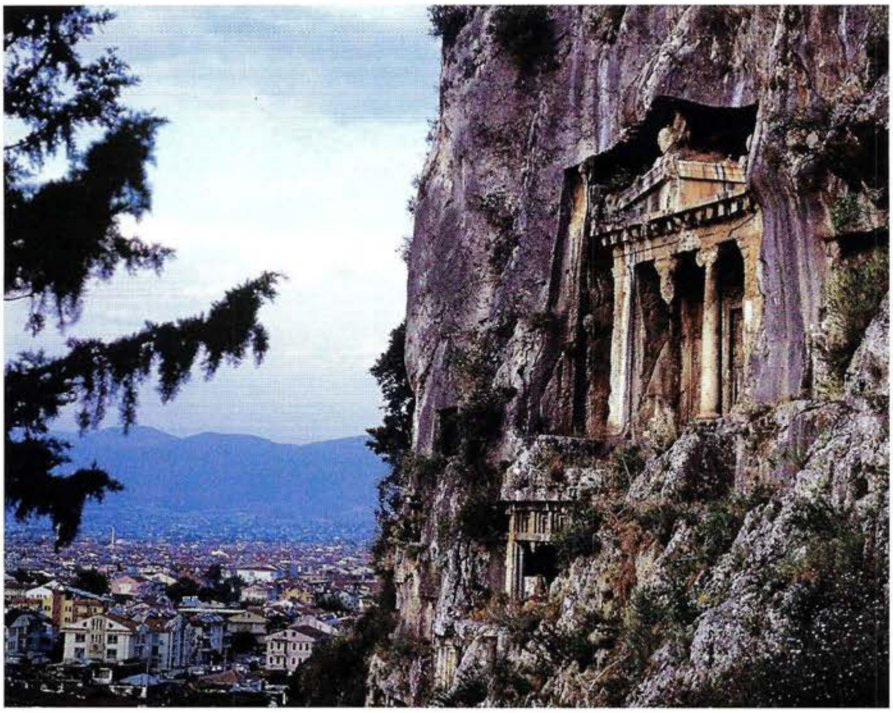
Swimming was perfect in this sheltered inlet, and in all the anchorages the clear water allowed us to admire beds of *Posidonia*, a pondweed relative (wrongly known as sea grass) growing on the bottom. These beds are an invaluable habitat for small creatures such as sea horses, and the grass-like leaves, torn up in storms, become matted by wave action to form the fascinating "*Posidonia* balls" that can occasionally be found washed up, and which have several times made smelly additions to my luggage. The balls are popular with the British botanical community after a distinguished member spent much of the 1980s trying to make them in his washing machine.

From Bencik to Fethiye is a long way, across the Gulf of Hisarönü, past the monumental stone blocks of the fort at Loryma (Carian work again) and then six hours on to Fethiye, but beauty still rules. It's not windy, but the bow chops through the water with more noise and energy, and land is distant or invisible. Towards evening the distant shape of Rhodes darkens into the horizon. As the moon rises in the east, so the moon-path on the water seems to lead to Baba Dağı, the mountain we are to go up the next day. Northwest of the Bay of Fethiye the sunset light fades from the snow patches up on Çal Dağı until we can no longer see them. Mountains, altitude, snow-melt habitat, getting height, "arctic alpine" plants, all have a great mystique for botanists, and we are excited anyway about ascending Baba Dağı, so these romantic evening views just add to perfection. There is also a personal thrill involved. The Taurus Mountains are famous for their grandeur, beauty and botanical riches, but I have never been to them. Baba Dağı may be a (relatively) little runt at the end of the line, compared with the monsters further east and north, but it is my first Taurus peak, and as such incomparably special.

There is no disappointment. We are whisked off in a Jeep to spend the morning walking on the lower peak, Mendos Dağı, linked to Baba Dağı by a col forested with another globally rare and special tree, *Cedrus libani*, the actual



OPPOSITE, TOP LEFT A TRUE ALPINE PLANT, 'ARABIS CAUCASICA' CLINGS TO SHEER ROCK
TOP RIGHT NATURAL BEAUTIES: ELEGANT THREAD-WINGED LACEWINGS
CENTRE RIGHT PRETTY WEEDS, A POPPY AND A PINK ANTHEMIS
BOTTOM THE RARE CRETAN DATE PALM, 'PHOENIX THEOPHRASTI', DISCOVERED FLOURISHING IN TURKEY
THIS PAGE, RIGHT THE SENSUOUSLY SMOOTH BARK OF 'ARBUTUS ANDRACHNE'



cedar of Lebanon, growing here in their thousands. It is difficult at this point not to pour out a long list of Latin names, as the limestone outcrops, trails and more open juniper scrub between sometimes giant cedars support a gloriously rich flora, still highly coloured at this cool height. Pink campions, blue and white vetches, an enchanting little sugar-pink "weed" daisy and scarlet tulips mix with small ferns in shady crevices, while the lush spear-shaped spring leaves of an autumn-flowering crocus and chipper bright green of *Cedrus* seedlings contrast with the bluish adult trees. These juveniles were a joyful sight, evidence of the natural regeneration of this rare tree.

The landscape of this mountain takes startlingly contrasting forms, as in places the weathered karst limestone has produced the completely flat hollows known as poljes (*polye* in Turkish). These are produced by the same dissolution in limestone as the more familiar sinkholes, or dolines, that are a feature of karst landscapes. Sinkholes, however, usually have free drainage into underground cave systems and are therefore roughly funnel-shaped, while in poljes the shafts, or ponors, give more restricted drainage, resulting in flat-bottomed, soil-lined depressions that often hold water during winter.

On Mendos Dağı the poljes are grazed or even cultivated in spring and summer. Some have farm settlements and, viewed from above, are startlingly visible among the slopes of dark conifers. Though they were full of botanically fascinating little green plants, the wow factor was upheld by much showier flowers in surrounding stony scrub, especially the tall bearded *Iris purpureobractea*, and a statuesque red peony, *Paeonia mascula ssp mascula*.

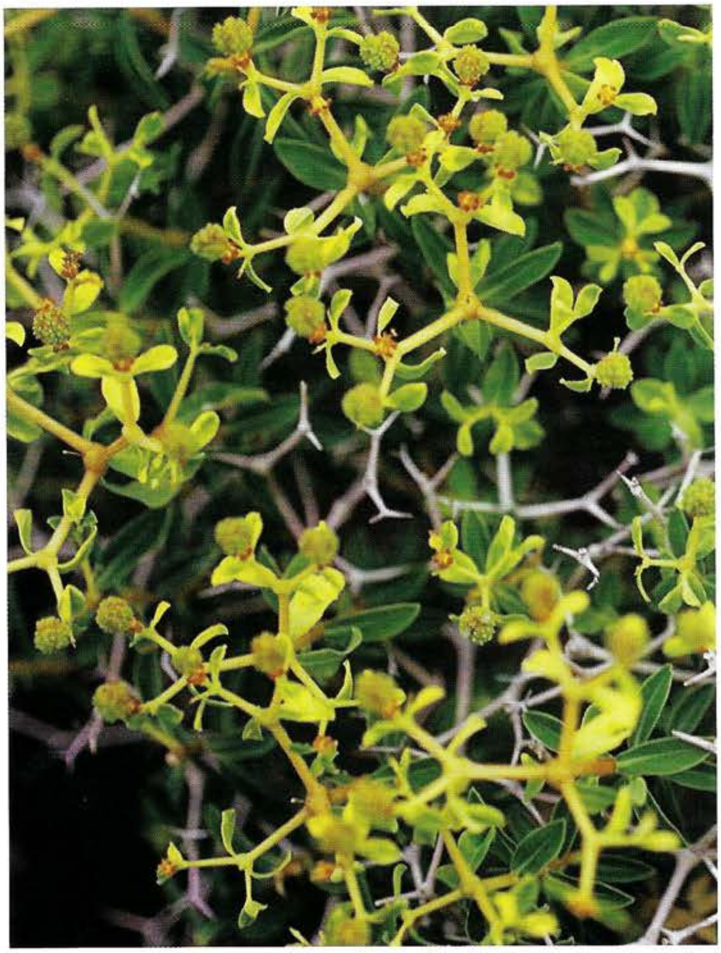
The high levels of Baba Dağı have suffered some insults since the mountain became a star international paragliding location. There is convenience, yes, as a Jeep can quite easily drive right to the top on a new graded road (our screams and clutchings were really only for fun), and even visitors with limited time can reach the treeline, gaze at the magnificent rocks and sheer slopes, and at the wonderful views down to the coast at Ölü Deniz and inland to the snows of Ak Dağ.

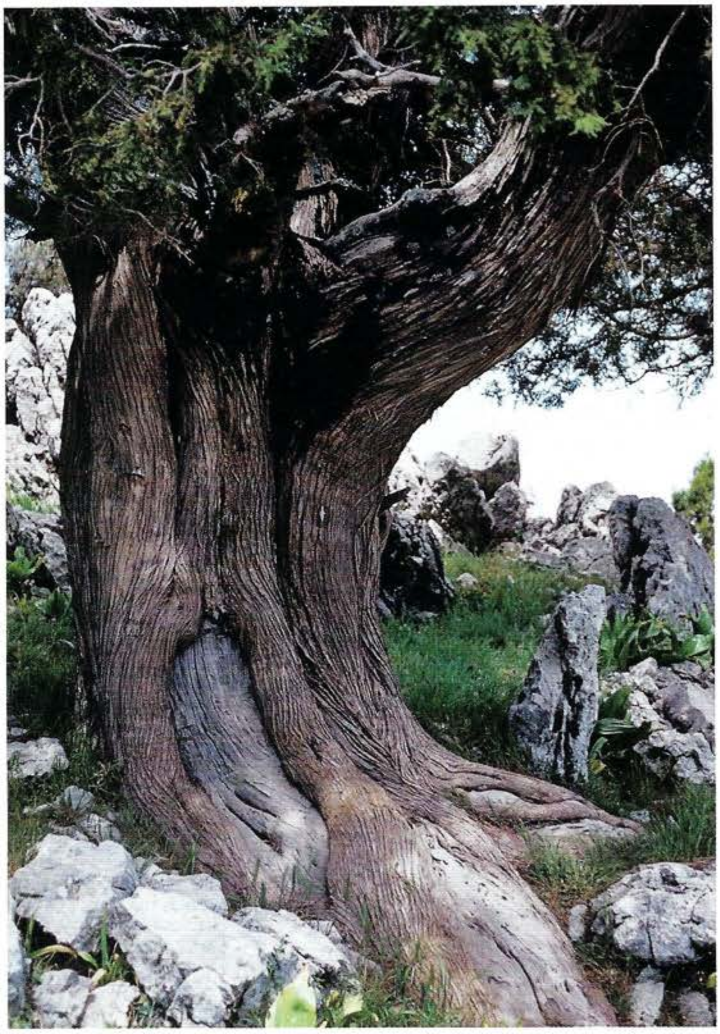
Alpine plants are always movingly admirable, racing to flower, fruit and seed in the very short time left to them between snow melting and sun and exposure shrivelling them away. Some manage a knife-edge balancing act on shaded ledges. A north-facing crevice will stay snow-filled until later in the spring but will also retain a fraction more moisture when summer scorches. On Baba Dağı there were some rare and charming miniature flowers, but most touching was *Prunus prostratus*, the dwarf almond, still in blossom at this height (1,989 metres) and, at less than 2cm tall, still recognisably close to its familiar relative.

Coming down from a mountain is always just that, in all ways, but regret was eased by coming back through the zone, just above "civilisation", where that morning we had noticed the pretty shrub *Styrax officinalis* in lavish bloom. There was enough light to visit the stunning Lycian tombs cut into the rock above the old town of Fethiye (formerly Telmessos). The grandest is that of Amnytas, from the fourth century BC, with its magnificent Doric façade, but in the rosy afterglow just before dusk even the most modest dark doorway commanded respect. In a garden beside the parking space a pomegranate was in full flower, its red petals reflecting the light on the tombs. Down below, the modern town was in blue shadow, but up by the cliffs this anciently cultivated fruit and these extraordinary tombs seemed to give an echo centuries old. ◆

ABOVE A 4TH-CENTURY BC ROCK-CUT LYCIAN TOMB ABOVE MODERN FETHİYE
OPPOSITE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT 'EUPHORBIA ACANTHOTHAMNOS' ON THE CLIFFS; 'PRUNUS PROSTRATUS', THE DWARF ALMOND, AT 1,989 METRES; A VENERABLE JUNIPER ON MENDOS DAĞI; THE YELLOW FLOWERS OF THE GIANT FENNEL, 'FERULA COMMUNIS'; A GNARLED ANCIENT OLIVE

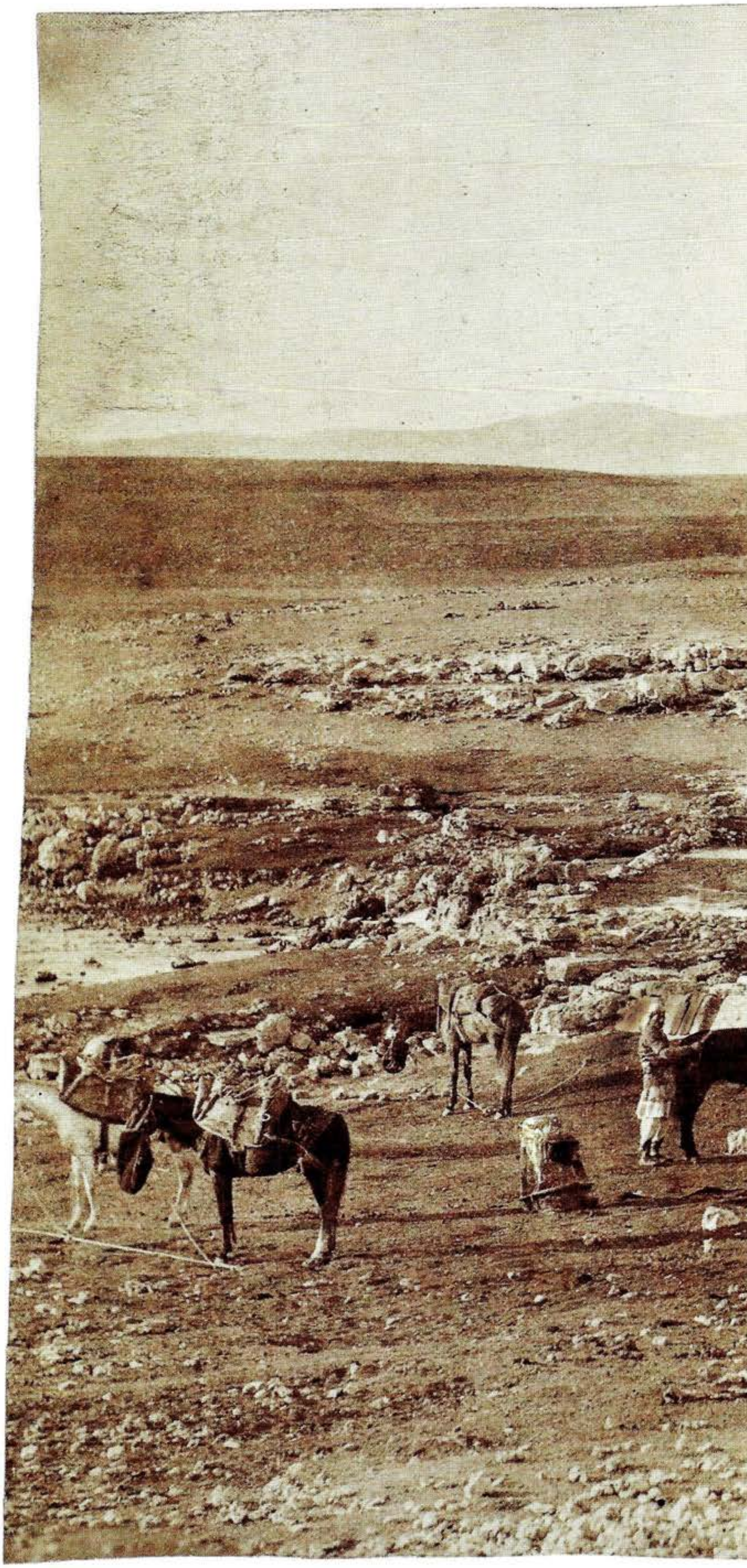
RO FITZGERALD *is a botanist and gardener living on Somerset's Quantock coast: ro@lilstock.eclipse.co.uk*



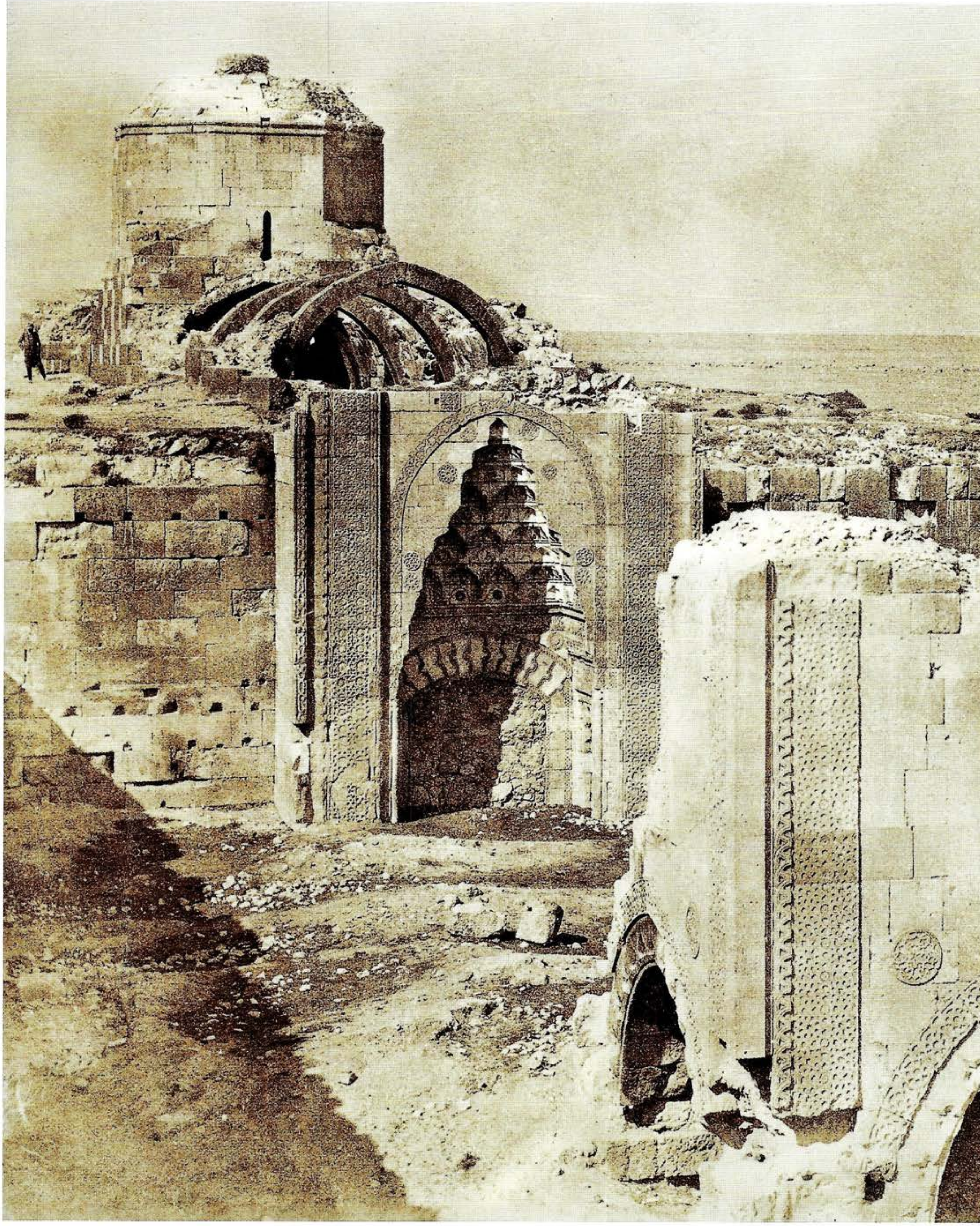


JOHN HENRY HAYNES WAS THE FATHER OF AMERICAN ARCHAEOLOGICAL PHOTOGRAPHY. MANY OF HIS IMAGES ARE THE ONLY RECORD OF A VANISHED ANATOLIAN HERITAGE. ON THE CENTENARY OF HIS DEATH, ROBERT OUSTERHOUT PAYS TRIBUTE TO A FORGOTTEN PIONEER

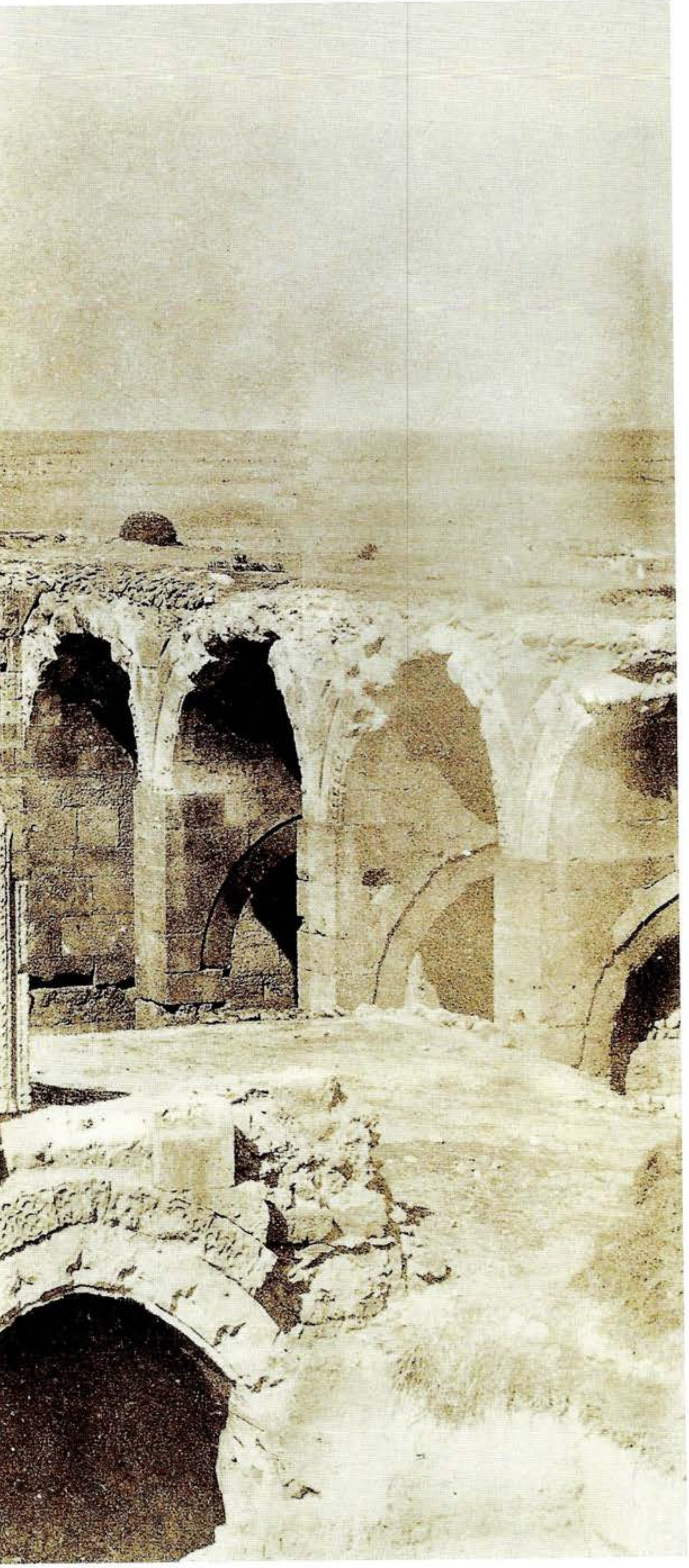
ON THE ROAD TO RUINS



EFLATUNPINAR (PLATO'S SPRING), A 1300BC HITTITE SHRINE NEAR LAKE BEYŞEHİR, WEST OF KONYA. FOLK BELIEF IN OTTOMAN TIMES CREDITED PLATO WITH BUILDING THE MONUMENT AS A TALISMAN TO PROTECT RESIDENTS FROM FLOODS. HAYNES'S IMAGES OF 1884 ARE THE EARLIEST OF THE SITE



HARVARD UNIVERSITY, AGA KHAN ARCHIVES

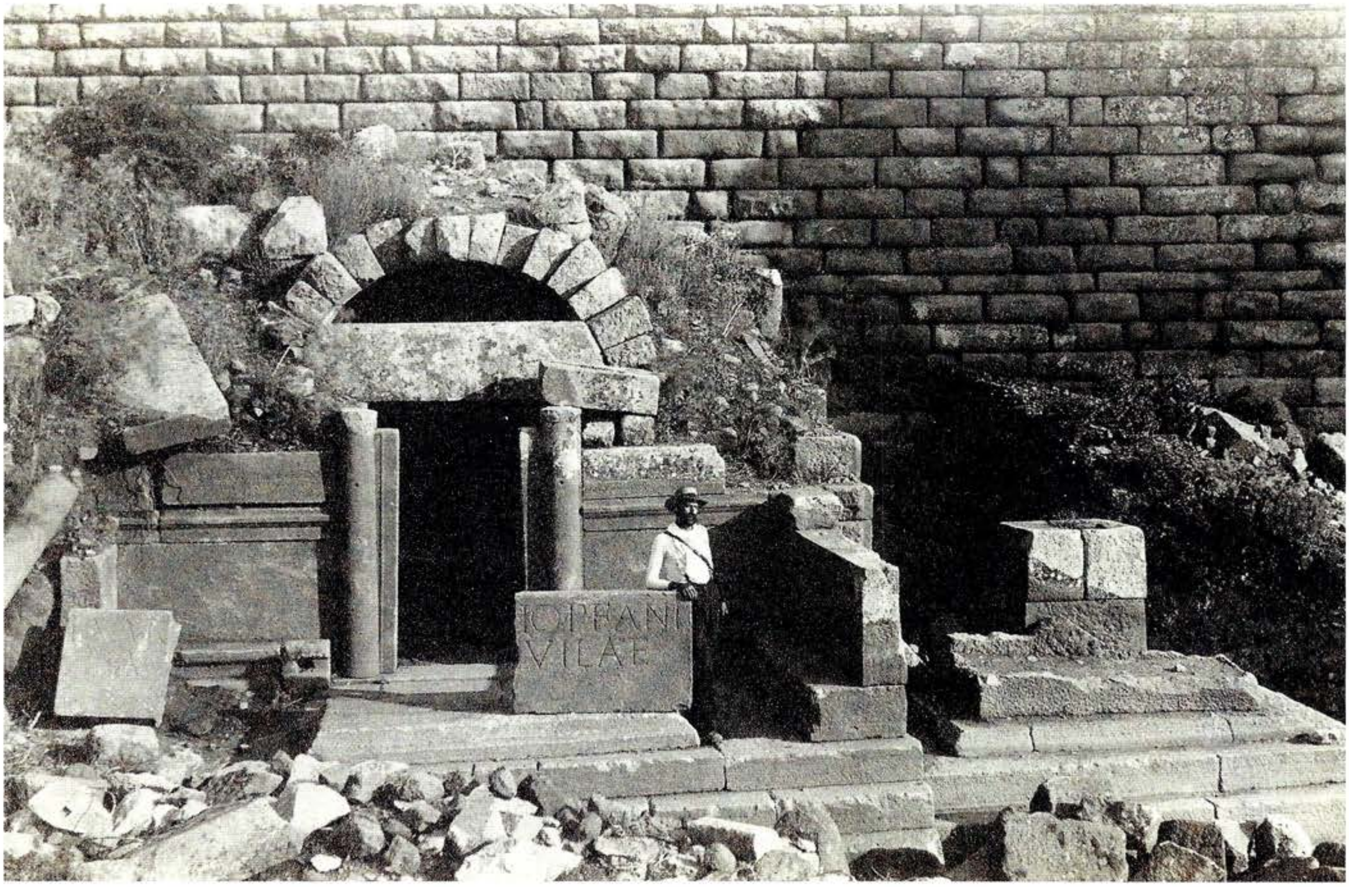


A ruined caravanserai rises, deserted on a barren plain. We see it from a high vantage point and a dramatic angle; its spacious courtyard opens before us; the walls extend diagonally to meet the line of the horizon. Skeletal arcades recede into space, the vaulting long since fallen. The camera nevertheless captures myriad details that testify to the building's faded grandeur: the portal, now blocked, is framed by elegant arches and a *muqarnas* vault; the pilasters are lined with intricate geometric reliefs. A lone figure, almost unnoticed, stands on the roof, dwarfed by the immensity of the ruin and the vastness of the surrounding plain. The photograph is at once evocative and documentary: its melancholy mood catches our imagination – even the grainy, sepia tones evoke the heat and dust of the Anatolian plain. We pause to contemplate the passage of time, while the carefully organised composition reveals the complexity of its subject, providing a sort of archaeological inventory of the standing remains.

For the 1884 view of the Sultan Han in the plain of Konya, the photographer, John Henry Haynes (1849–1910), drew on two traditions, one old, one new: the long-standing art of landscape painting and the recent science of archaeological photography. His short apprenticeship in photography came at the hands of William J Stillman (1828–1901), as the latter recorded the Acropolis of Athens in 1880. Stillman had been trained as a painter of picturesque landscapes on the upper Hudson River of New York state, and Haynes's work draws on that tradition. But

ABOVE JOHN HENRY HAYNES AS A STUDENT, C1875, AND ROSSETTI'S PORTRAIT OF HIS MENTOR, 'THE AMERICAN PRE-RAPHAELITE' WILLIAM J STILLMAN

LEFT SULTAN HAN (1232–36), A CARAVANSERAI NEAR AKSARAY, WAS PART OF THE SELJUK DEVELOPMENT OF TRANSPORT ROUTES ALONG THE SILK ROAD. HAYNES PHOTOGRAPHED THE RUINS IN 1884



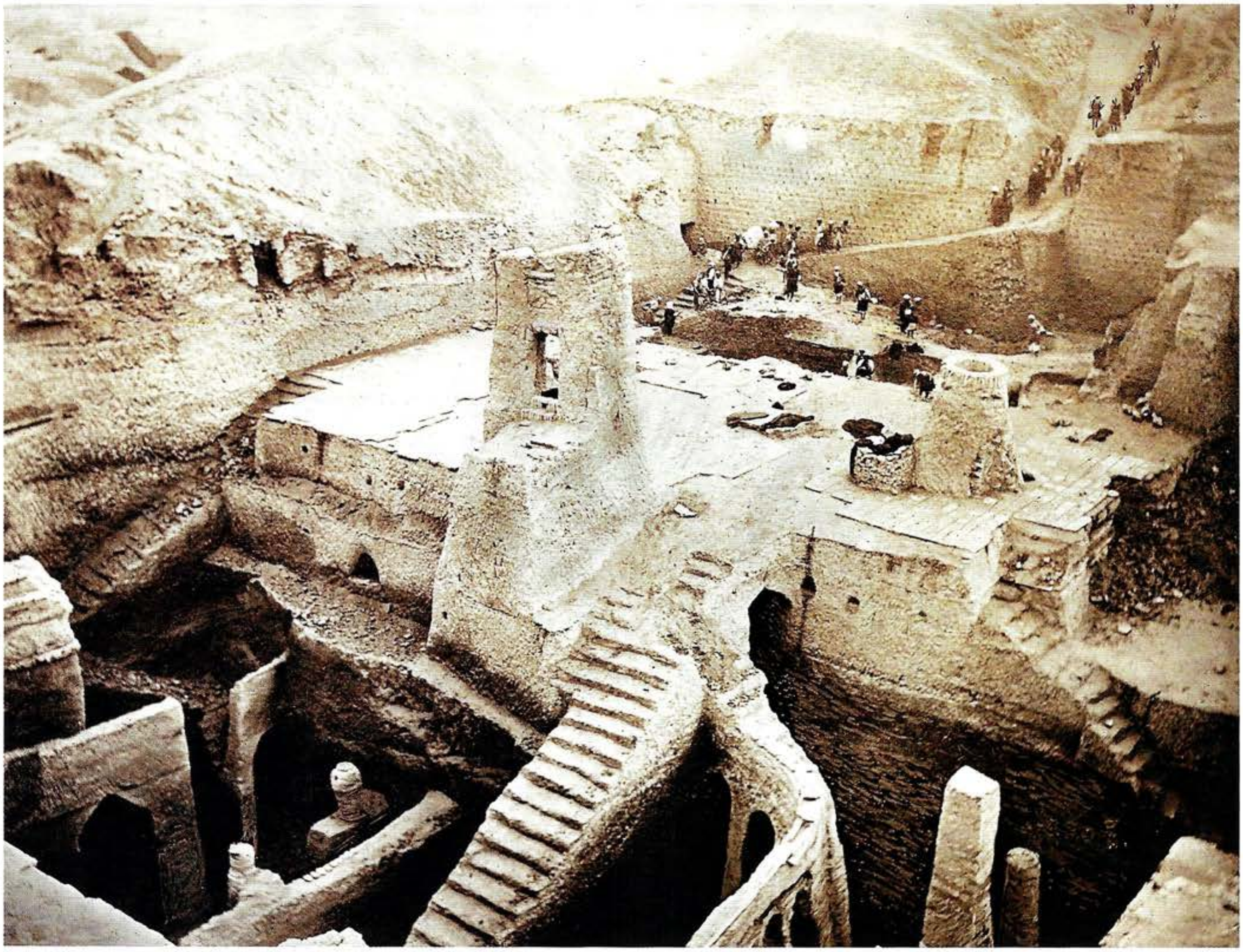
Haynes cut his teeth as an archaeologist at Assos, near Troy, the first American venture into classical archaeology. In this picture, c1882, the man posed in the cemetery is the archaeologist Francis Bacon, who married the daughter of Frank Calvert, the real discoverer of Troy

Haynes spent much of his career as an excavator, and had been instructed to become an archaeological photographer. Indeed, he may be regarded as the father of American archaeological photography, the first to use the camera systematically to document ancient remains. He plied his trade at America's first classical excavation, at Assos (1881–83) in northwest Asia Minor, and at the first American Mesopotamian excavation at Nippur (1889–1900) in southern Iraq.

An orphaned farm boy from upstate Massachusetts, Haynes studied classics at Williams College and subsequently worked briefly as a high-school principal. A chance encounter in 1880 led him to join a proposed American excavation at Knossos on Crete, then still part of the Ottoman Empire. After several weeks on Crete, however, it became clear that his team would not be issued a *firman* to excavate. The team leader, the same William J Stillman, had earlier been the American consul on Crete, and in that capacity had supported the failed Greek insurrection on the island; the Ottoman authorities did not welcome his return. Haynes accompanied Stillman back to Athens, and while waiting for further instructions from his sponsors at the Archaeological Institute of America, worked as Stillman's assistant.

Moving to Europe as a young man, Stillman became known as "the American Pre-Raphaelite", more for his melodramatic lifestyle than for his abilities as a painter. He was a favourite of the art critic John Ruskin, with whom he travelled, and after whom he named his first son. They eventually fell out when Stillman made the mistake of asking Ruskin's opinion of his paintings. Met with muted enthusiasm, Stillman destroyed his remaining canvases, suffered an episode of hysterical blindness, then turned to photography, archaeology and eventually journalism.

Possibly his greatest professional success had been a folio of photographs of the Athenian Acropolis, issued in 1870. Following the suicide of his wife, the death of his beloved son Russie and the failure of the Cretan mission, the unfortunate Stillman decided to redo the folio. But rather than trying something new, he monomaniacally attempted to re-create the exact framing, vantage points and camera angles of his original photographs, with Haynes working as his assistant.



UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA MUSEUM ARCHIVES

NIPPUR, 1893, THE COMPLEX SITE THAT SANK HAYNES. THESE EXCAVATIONS IN THE TEMPLE COURTYARD GIVE A SENSE OF THE IMMENSITY OF THE ENTERPRISE, FOR WHICH HAYNES WAS THE SOLE ARCHAEOLOGIST. THIS IMAGE BECAME THE FRONTISPIECE OF HILPRECHT'S 1903 BOOK, 'EXPLORATIONS IN BIBLE LANDS', AND WAS SUBSEQUENTLY USED AS THE SUBJECT OF A PAINTING BY OSMAN HAMDI BEY. HAYNES WAS NEVER CREDITED

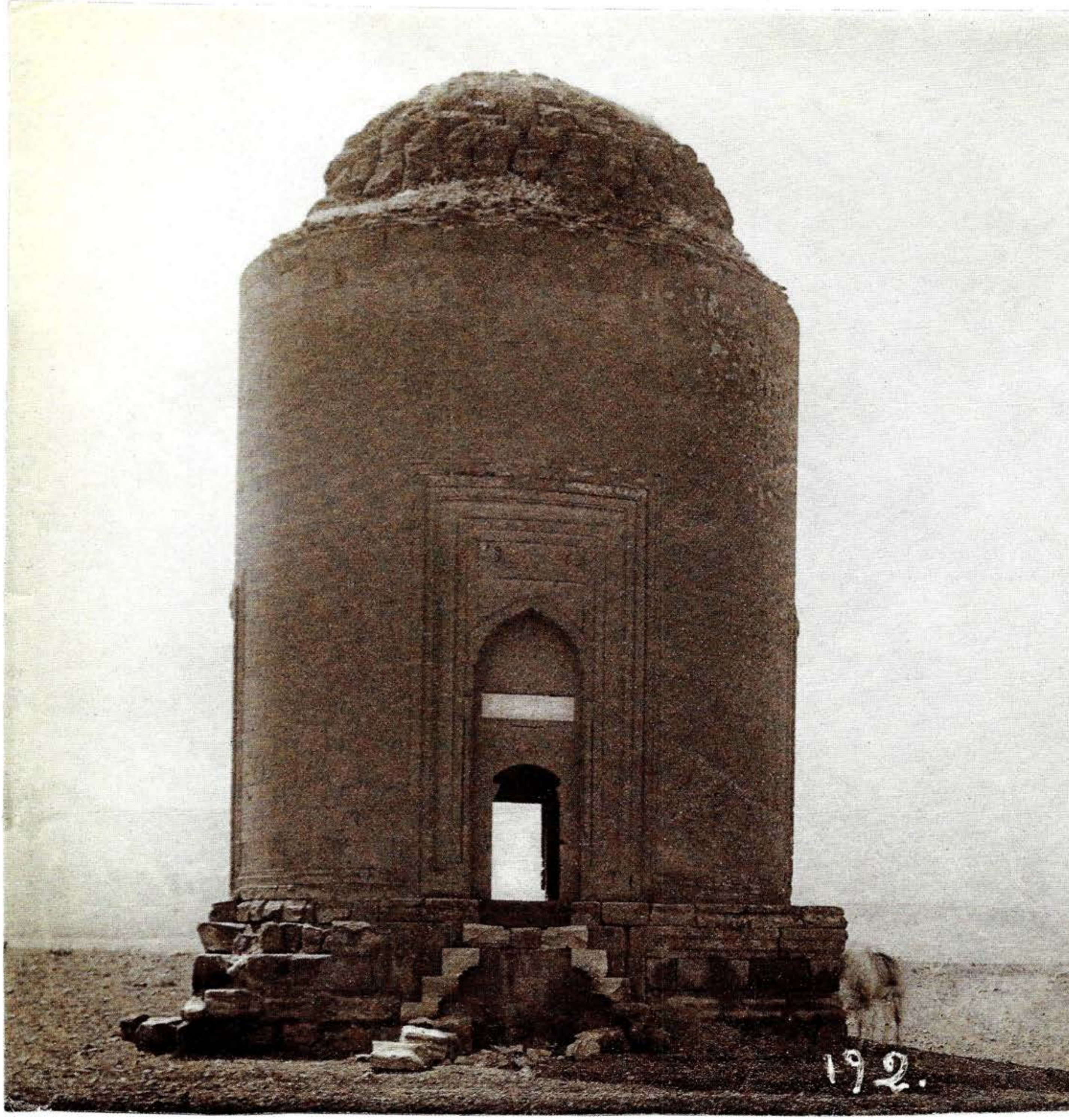
The apprenticeship with Stillman had a lasting impact on Haynes's own photography, and Stillman's dogged determination to find exactly the right view, properly framed, must have impressed the young Haynes. Although his personality was much more subdued than that of his teacher, Haynes's compositions are often remarkably similar. The jagged lines, striking angles, high vantage point and spatial recession in Haynes's photograph of the Sultan Han, for example, echo Stillman's views of the Parthenon. Haynes favoured the same dramatic isolation of monuments and figures, with elements of the barren landscape drawn into sharp focus, as evident in his evocative views of the Hittite shrine at Eflatunpınar. In a similar manner, Haynes could use the contrasts of solids and voids and of dark and light to great effect. In his view of the Seljuk *türbe* at Kayseri, he juxtaposes its massive cylinder with a cemetery of frail tombstones and a view into limitless space. In fact, several views of Athens once in Haynes's possession correspond to published photographs by Stillman; they are unlabelled and could easily be the work of either man. As with Stillman's views, there is always an element of compositional artistry. From his short apprenticeship, Haynes rapidly developed the discerning eye of a picturesque landscape painter.

Haynes's work as an archaeological photographer began almost immediately thereafter, as he was dispatched to the Assos excavations in 1881. Rather than return to the US at the end of the season, he found employment at American mission schools in the Ottoman Empire, first at Robert College in Istanbul, where he taught Latin and English, and subsequently at Central Turkey College in Aintab (Gaziantep).

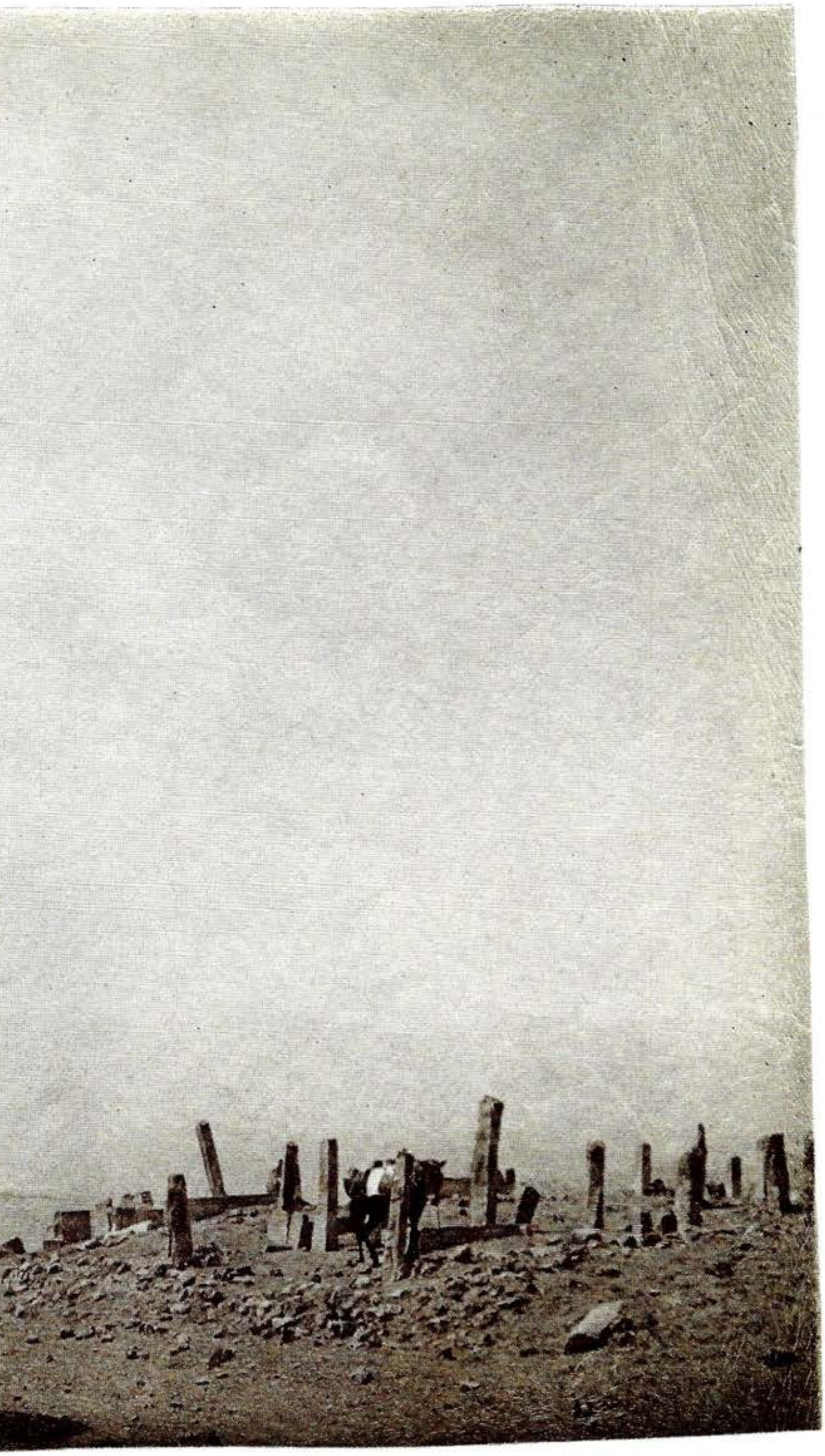
Throughout the 1880s, he travelled with a camera, documenting his journeys through Anatolia, Syria and Mesopotamia. He joined the Wolfe Expedition of 1884–85, a reconnaissance mission to Mesopotamia, out of which grew the University of Pennsylvania excavations at Nippur, which Haynes oversaw, first as business manager and photographer, later as field director. He also served as the first US consul in Baghdad (1888–92).

Haynes was an accomplished and prolific

'In his view of the Seljuk türbe at Kayseri, Haynes juxtaposes its massive cylinder with a cemetery of frail tombstones and a view into limitless space… From his short apprenticeship, Haynes rapidly developed the discerning eye of a picturesque landscape painter'



UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA MUSEUM ARCHIVES



photographer and the first to document many important archaeological sites at a time when travel in the Ottoman hinterland was at best difficult, often painfully slow and occasionally dangerous. Journeying with crates of photographic plates only added to the complexity. Surprisingly, however, he remains all but unknown today. Most of his surviving photographs are unpublished; those that were published were either uncredited or credited to others. At Assos, for example, the final publication notes in passing that Haynes "took a number of photographs of the antiquities discovered and of picturesque features of the city and its vicinity", although the volume contains more than 60 of his images. He fared little better in the excavation reports from Nippur.

Nor is Haynes fairly acknowledged for his work as an archaeologist. After years of isolation at Nippur, working under harsh and hostile conditions, much of the time alone, he slowly unravelled. In the end, his accomplishments were discredited by the University of Pennsylvania's eminent Babylonian scholar Hermann Hilprecht. The absentee director of the Nippur expedition, Hilprecht also claimed sole responsibility for Haynes's discoveries – notably the famed Temple Library of cuneiform tablets. His career in tatters, Haynes succumbed to mental illness, ending his life a broken man.

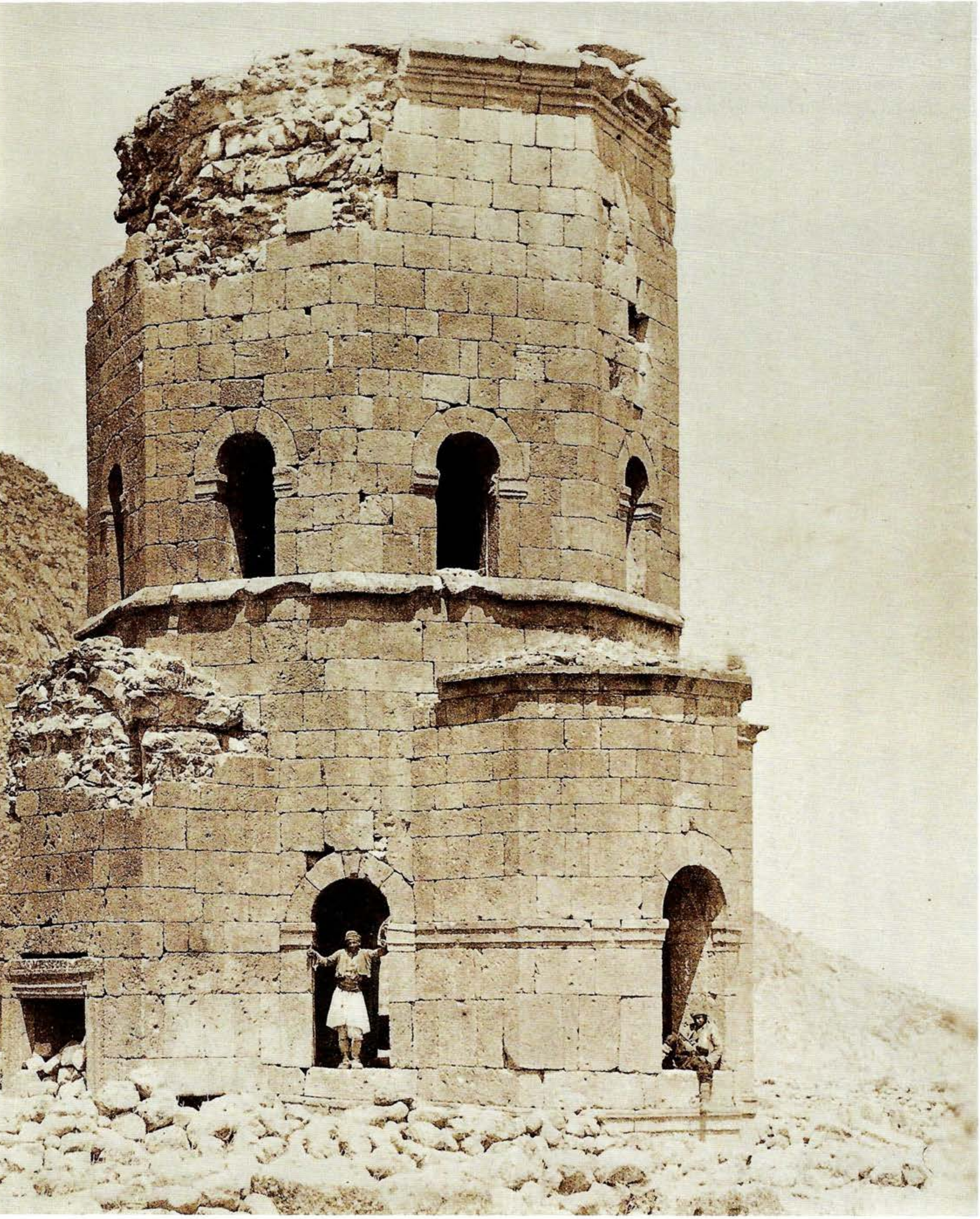
Several hundred unpublished photographs survive in the archives of the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology and in the Aga Khan photographic archive at Harvard. The surviving photographs are principally from the excavations at Assos and Nippur, as well as journeys Haynes undertook in the summers of 1884 and 1887 across Phrygia, Lycaonia, Cappadocia, Cilicia and into Syria, often underwritten by members of the fledgling Archaeological Institute of America, for whom he was to provide scientific documentation of the ancient civilisations of Anatolia and the East.

In spite of his obscurity, Haynes left quite a paper trail. The photographs are accompanied by letters and journals recording his impressions of people and landscapes, as well as the mundane details of travel. When I say mundane, I mean mundane. Haynes was not the most compelling of diarists, and his writing reveals little of the sensitivity evident in his photographs: he will belabour the less-than-satisfactory conditions of lodgings, the weather,

Sırçalı Kümbet, Kayseri. In this artfully composed shot, taken on one of his Anatolian expeditions, Haynes juxtaposes the monumental 14th-century Seljuk mausoleum with the frail tombstones and empty space beyond

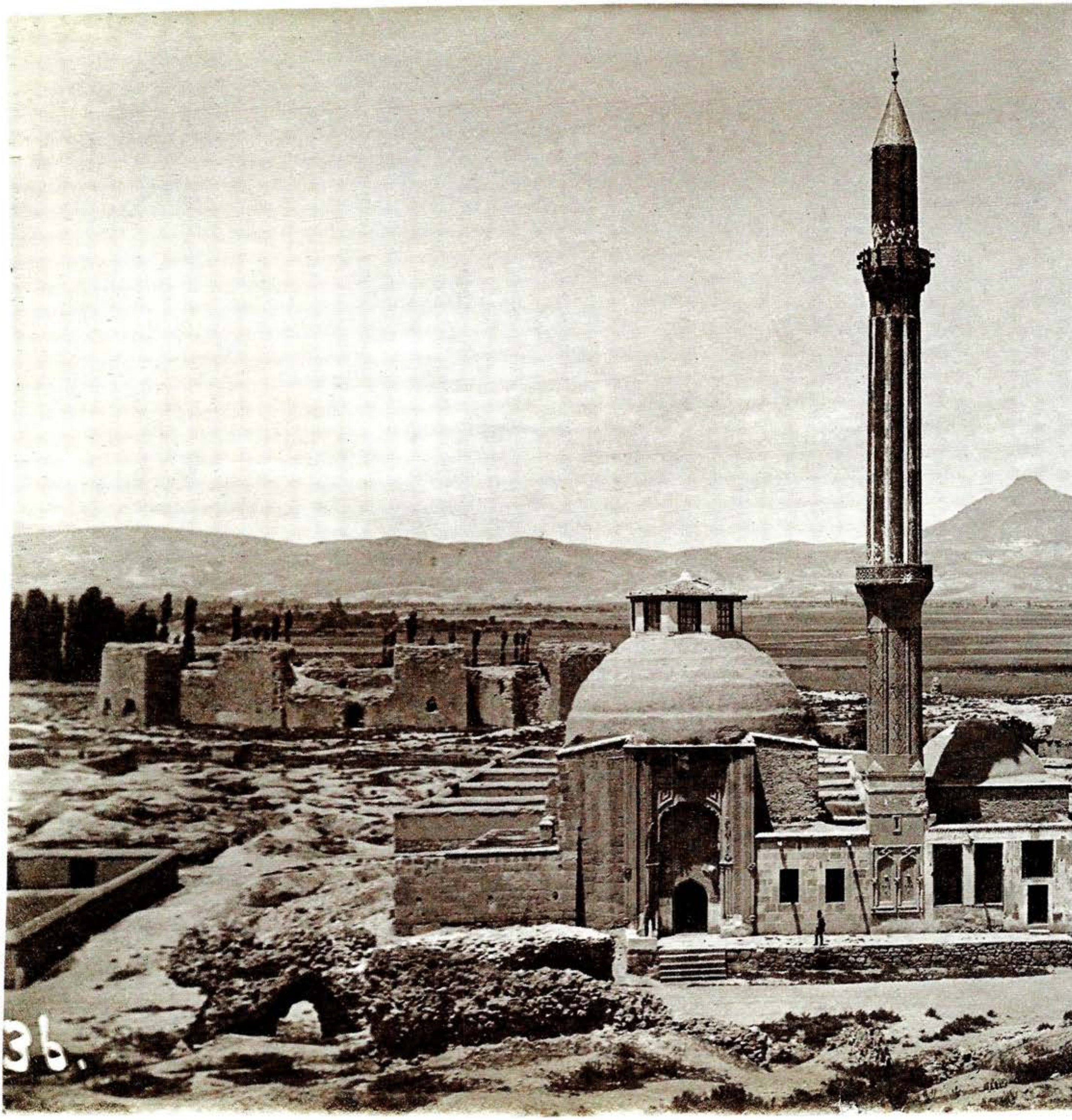
'Since there was no water within several miles and the sun was very hot, I could only take a few photographs as speedily as possible and hasten away to join the caravan...'

BİNBİRKİLİSE, CHURCH NO 8. HAYNES VISITED THIS EARLY CHRISTIAN SETTLEMENT, KNOWN AS 'THE THOUSAND AND ONE CHURCHES', IN 1887. ALTHOUGH ISOLATED ON THE MOUNTAIN OF KARADAĞ, SOUTHEAST OF KONYA, THE SITE HAD CAUGHT THE ATTENTION OF WILLIAM J HAMILTON IN 1836–37, AND HIS ACCOUNT LED OTHER EXPLORERS THERE. HAYNES'S ARE THE OLDEST KNOWN PHOTOS FROM THE SITE, WHICH WAS DEVASTATED BY EARTHQUAKE BEFORE IT WAS STUDIED BY GERTRUDE BELL AND SIR WILLIAM RAMSAY IN 1907

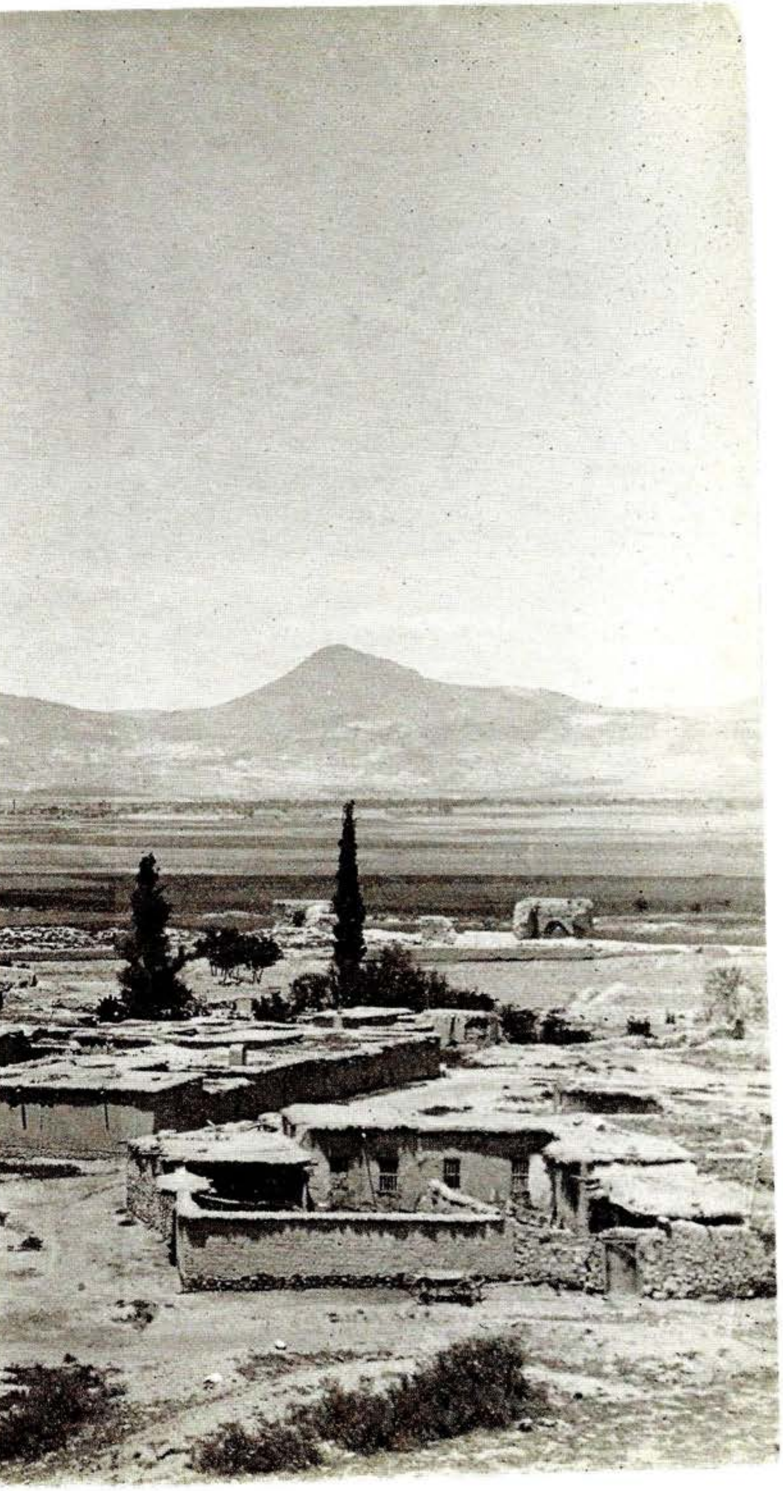


UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA MUSEUM ARCHIVES

'At Konya the view of the İnce Minare Medresesi shows the distinctive minaret before its partial destruction. It is a view very typical of Haynes: taken from a high vantage point with the building set against a barren landscape'



UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA MUSEUM ARCHIVES



or the best way to pack glass negatives. At the same time, he often forgets to note place names and is maddenly brief concerning the sites he visited, presumably relying on his photographs to fill in the details.

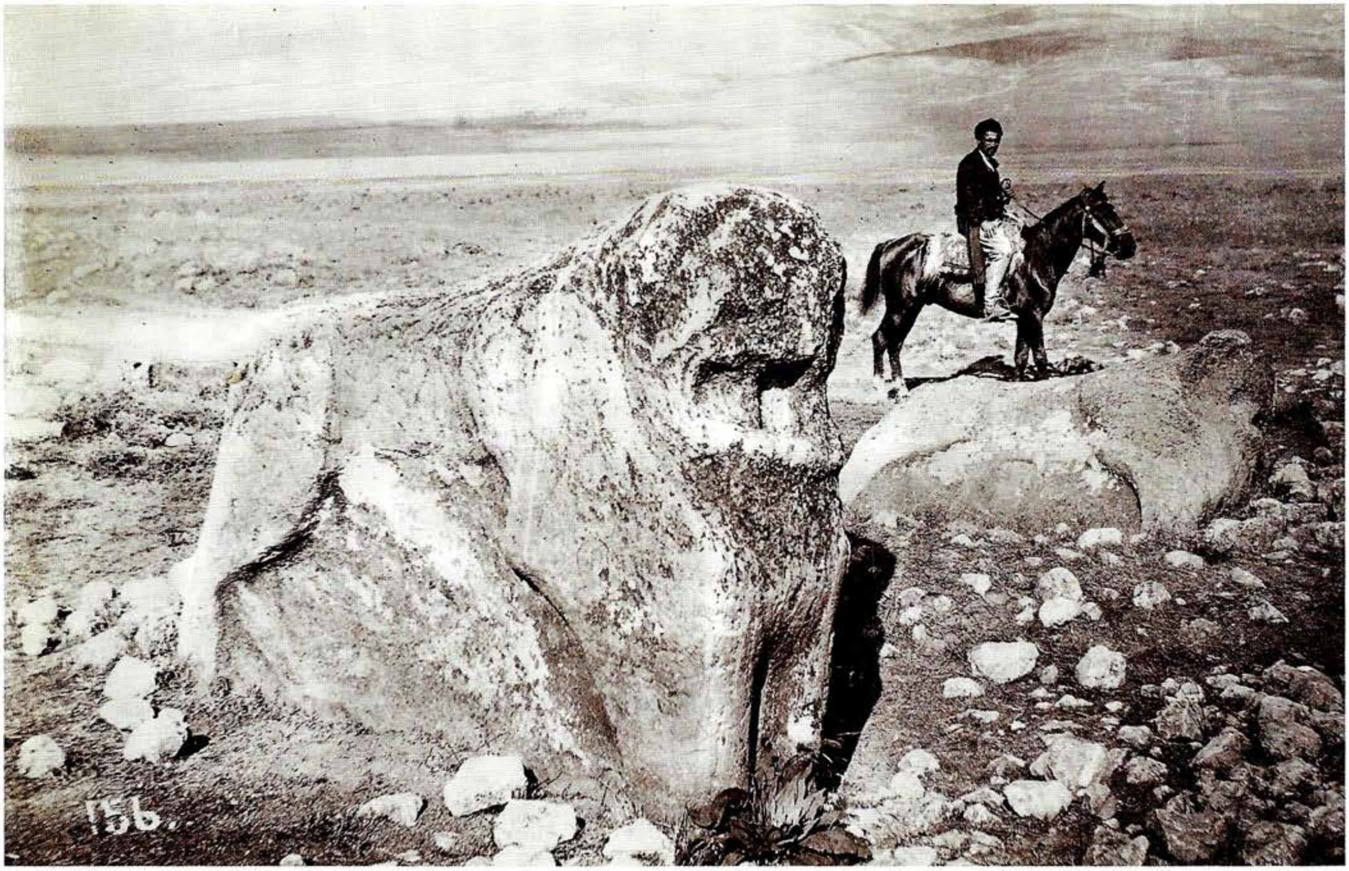
Haynes's first season at Assos did not turn out as planned, for he was unable to obtain the necessary photographic plates and ended up working as an archaeologist instead. Despite dissension within the team and difficult living conditions, Haynes seems to have loved the experience of archaeology and thereafter styled himself an archaeologist rather than a photographer. Properly equipped, he photographed in earnest the second season, struggling to perfect his darkroom techniques under challenging circumstances. His letters from this period are filled with apologies for what he viewed as inadequate results.

Following the end of the school year at Robert College in the summer of 1884, Haynes met his friend, the noted epigraphist and historical geographer John Robert Sitlington Sterrett (1851–1914), in Akşehir for an excursion across central Anatolia. Haynes and Sterrett knew each other from the excavations at Assos, where Sterrett had prepared the inscriptions for publication. Immediately following their journey, the two travelled together again on the Wolfe Expedition to Mesopotamia and they stayed in regular contact for years afterwards.

From Akşehir, Haynes and Sterrett travelled to the Hittite shrine at Eflatunpınar and the Seljuk capital at Konya, and Haynes took numerous photographs at both sites. These are the earliest photos of Eflatunpınar, and they may be the earliest at Konya as well. At the former, he captures the romantic austerity of the isolated setting, while at Konya he records countless details no longer evident or much altered. The view of the İnce Minare Medresesi shows the distinctive minaret before its partial destruction. It is a view very typical of Haynes: taken from a high vantage point with the building set against a barren landscape.

The two then travelled across Cappadocia to Kayseri, where they visited the American missionaries at Talas and then continued eastward, as Sterrett hunted for Roman milestones and ancient inscriptions. They travelled as far east as Malatya,

KONYA HAYNES PHOTOGRAPHED THE İNCE MINARE MEDRESESI (1258), THE COLLEGIATE MOSQUE IN THE SELJUK CAPITAL, IN 1884, BEFORE THE MINARET WAS DESTROYED BY LIGHTNING IN 1901. HAYNES WAS ONE OF THE FIRST TO PHOTOGRAPH THE SELJUK CAPITAL



HARVARD UNIVERSITY, AGA KHAN ARCHIVES

ASLANTAŞ, NEAR MALATYA, 1884. HAYNES POSITIONED A COMPANION ON HORSEBACK TO ECHO THE POSE OF THE MONUMENTAL HITTITE LIONS

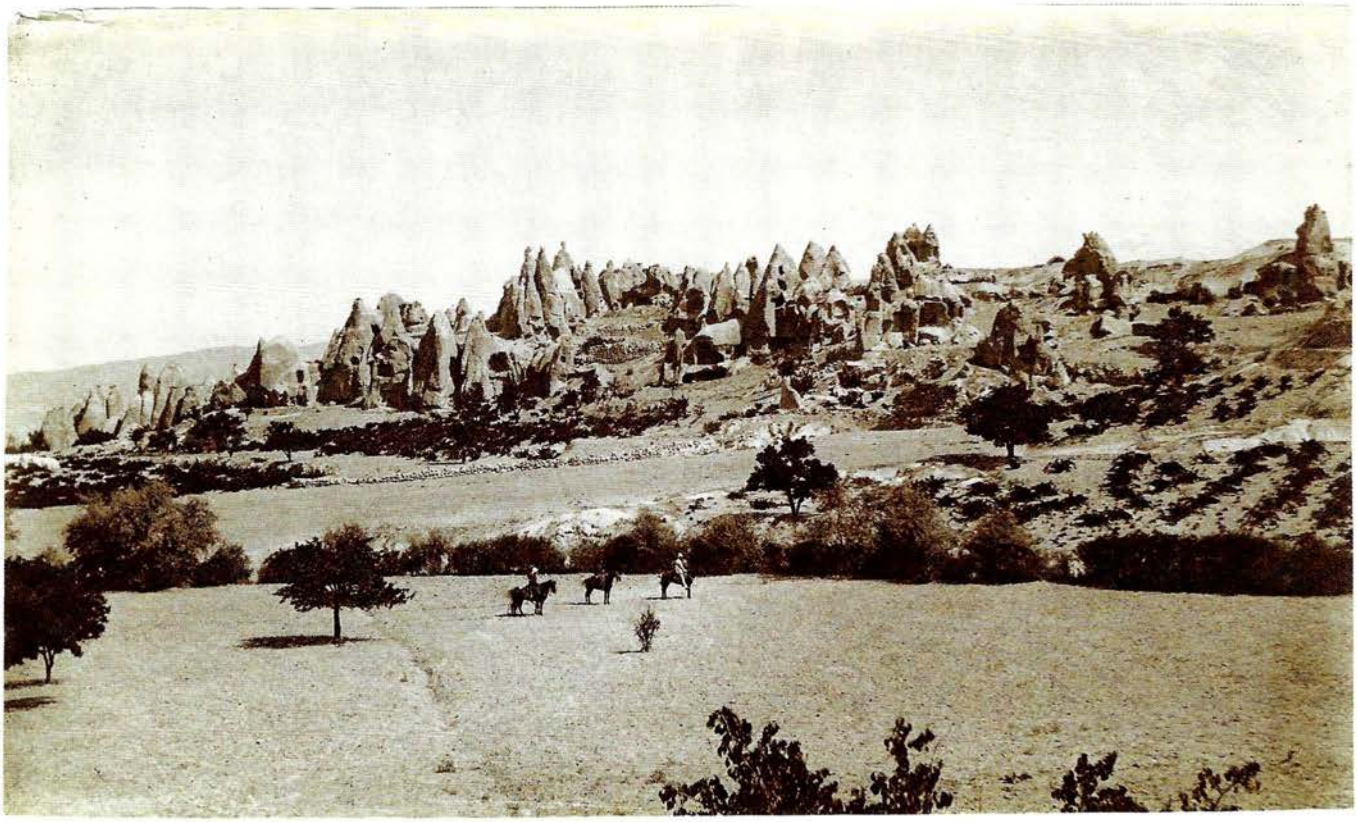
where they found the ancient lions at Aslantaş. Here Haynes positioned a local travelling companion on horseback behind the lions so that the pose of the horse echoes that of the lions. They returned by way of Kayseri across Cappadocia, and then through Boğazköy to Ankara, where their journey effectively terminated. In his "Preliminary Report on an Epigraphical Journey", published in 1885, Sterrett comments that Haynes had taken 320 photos during their travels.

Haynes was particularly captivated by Cappadocia, visiting the region on both excursions. He took dozens of photographs in the areas around Selime in 1884, where Haynes and Sterrett seem to have been the first Westerners to record a visit to the site. They also visited the Göreme and Soğanlı Valleys, following in the footsteps of William Hamilton, who recorded his travels through the region in the 1830s. Haynes seems to have been more interested in the curious "fairy chimneys" than the architecture. Still, his photos are valuable documents, recording landforms and architecture that have since deteriorated.

Haynes recorded his first impressions of the region at Selime, where he spent the night on the roof of his lodgings and was too excited to sleep: "...here with the bright moonlight to make night seem like day one feels rather like studying and admiring these wonderful abodes of past generations than like closing his wondering eyes in dreamy slumber, and yet it seems well nigh impossible to quiet one's excited feelings with such surroundings. Altogether these rock formations and the multitude of excavated dwellings... appear to me now the most wonderful thing I have ever been permitted to rest my eyes upon in all my travels and among all the wonderfully interesting things it has been my good fortune to see in the land of wonders" (*UPM Journal* 3, 1884).

He continues in this vein for several more pages, as he accepts the opinion that these were at one time the dwellings of Christians fleeing persecution. In 1892 Haynes published a folio of photographs taken during a journey in the summer of 1887. Judging from its general obscurity, it was not a commercial success. In it he included 47 views of Cappadocia, writing in the brief introduction: "Who were the first occupants of these wonderful caves we do not know; but from the appearance of the excavations themselves we judge them to have been made in very ancient times by a race of people of whom we know very little. Whatever we may think of the origins of these peculiar habitations it is certain from the churches and chapels of the Byzantine period that they were once occupied by Christians. It is also reasonable to suppose that the persecutions of the Roman emperors drove these early Christians from the coasts of Asia Minor to this obscure region where they could live in concealment in these abandoned dwellings."

Although he contemplated writing a book about the



UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA MUSEUM ARCHIVES

CAPPADOCIA THIS LANDSCAPE NEAR GÖREME, WITH STERRETT ON HORSEBACK, WAS SHOT IN 1884. HAYNES WAS FASCINATED BY THE VOLCANIC FAIRY CHIMNEYS OF CAPPADOCIA. THE MORE THAN 100 PHOTOS HE TOOK THERE DURING HIS TRAVELS IN 1884 AND 1887 ARE THE OLDEST OF THE REGION. MOST DEPICT THE ODD, ERODED LANDSCAPE, WITH DWELLINGS AND CHAPELS CUT INTO THE ROCK

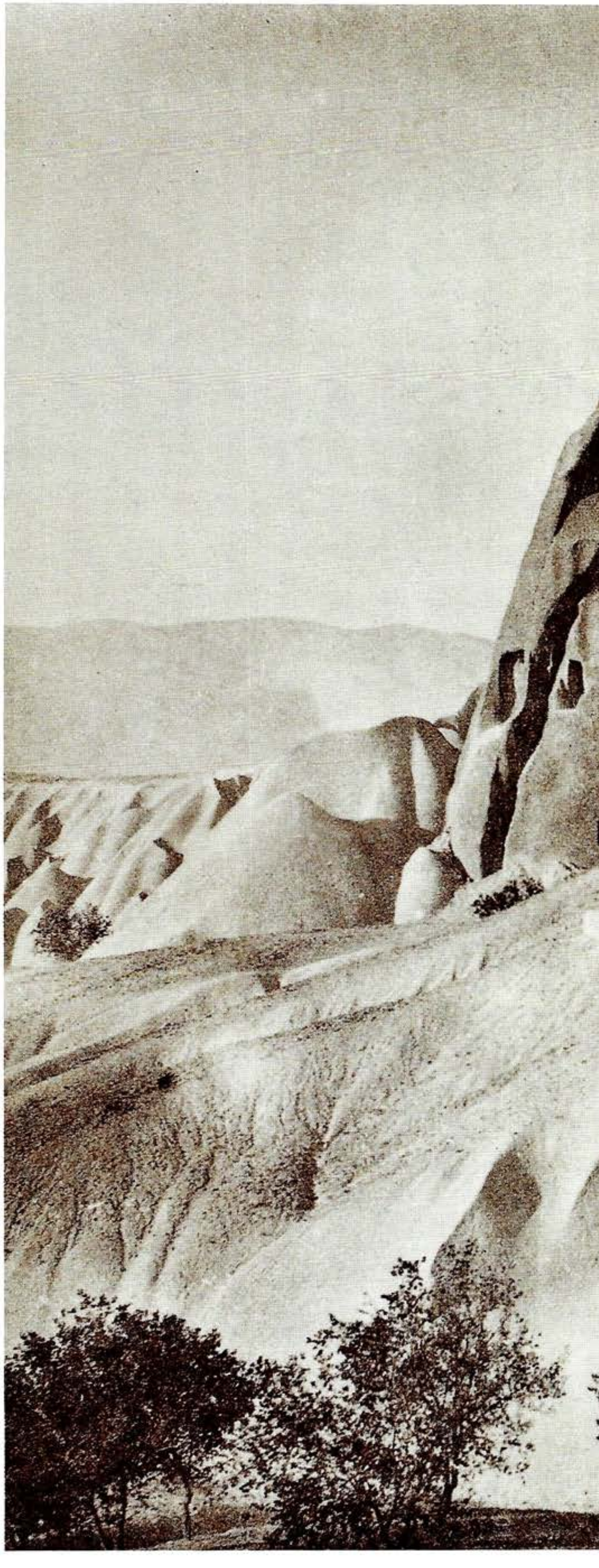
region, this never came to fruition. In a letter to his family of October 1885 he writes: "I am unfortunate enough to have more reputation as a photographer than I want: for my friends call upon me pretty frequently and I have in this way done a good deal but I do not like it. It makes a drudge of me and unfits me for any literary work. I ought moreover to find time for study and to work up into a treatise last summer's investigations among the cave dwellers of Asia Minor. But as yet have not found the requisite time to do so. Pres. Norton urges me to write up some of my experiences for the *American Journal of Archaeology* and I ought to do it or give up archaeological work forever."

Many of his photos from the 1884 trip seem to have ended up as the property of his travelling companion, Sterrett, who gives a good sense of what Haynes's unwritten book might have been like in a 1919 article in *National Geographic*, entitled "The Cone Dwellers of Asia Minor: A Primitive People Who Live in Nature-Made Apartment Houses Fashioned by Volcanic Violence and Trickling Streams". In it he compares the inhabitants of Cappadocia to primitive, uncivilised cavemen, drawing comparisons from ancient texts, such as Diodorus Siculus's fanciful account of the races of the extreme south, the Ethiopians and the Troglodytes, which he quotes at length: they drink blood, run around naked, kill the aged and infirm, and make merry at funerals. Sterrett supposed the rock-cut settlements to have been from the Bronze Age, with a few Byzantine intrusions.

The article is illustrated with no less than 52 of Haynes's photos, from both trips, all credited to Sterrett. The article appeared several years after the deaths of both men, so I'm not sure we can blame Sterrett, but it seems to have been Haynes's fate that his work should be credited to others. We can be certain that these are his photos, because they match those he kept in his possession and those that appeared in his 1892 folio; Haynes's journal regularly records Sterrett going ahead to find inscriptions while Haynes stayed behind to photograph the monuments and landscapes.

Haynes's tour of 1887 was supported by William R Ware of Columbia University, specifically for the purpose of photographing archaeological sites. He revisited several destinations from his 1884 tour, including Eflatunpınar, Cappadocia and Kayseri. There was growing interest at that time in the Hittites and Phrygians and other obscure early peoples of Anatolia. During this trip, Haynes took measurements at many of the monuments he visited, as at Eflatunpınar, where he notes simply: "Took photos and measured the huge pile. Found it difficult to climb to the top and get down safely." Later he realised he

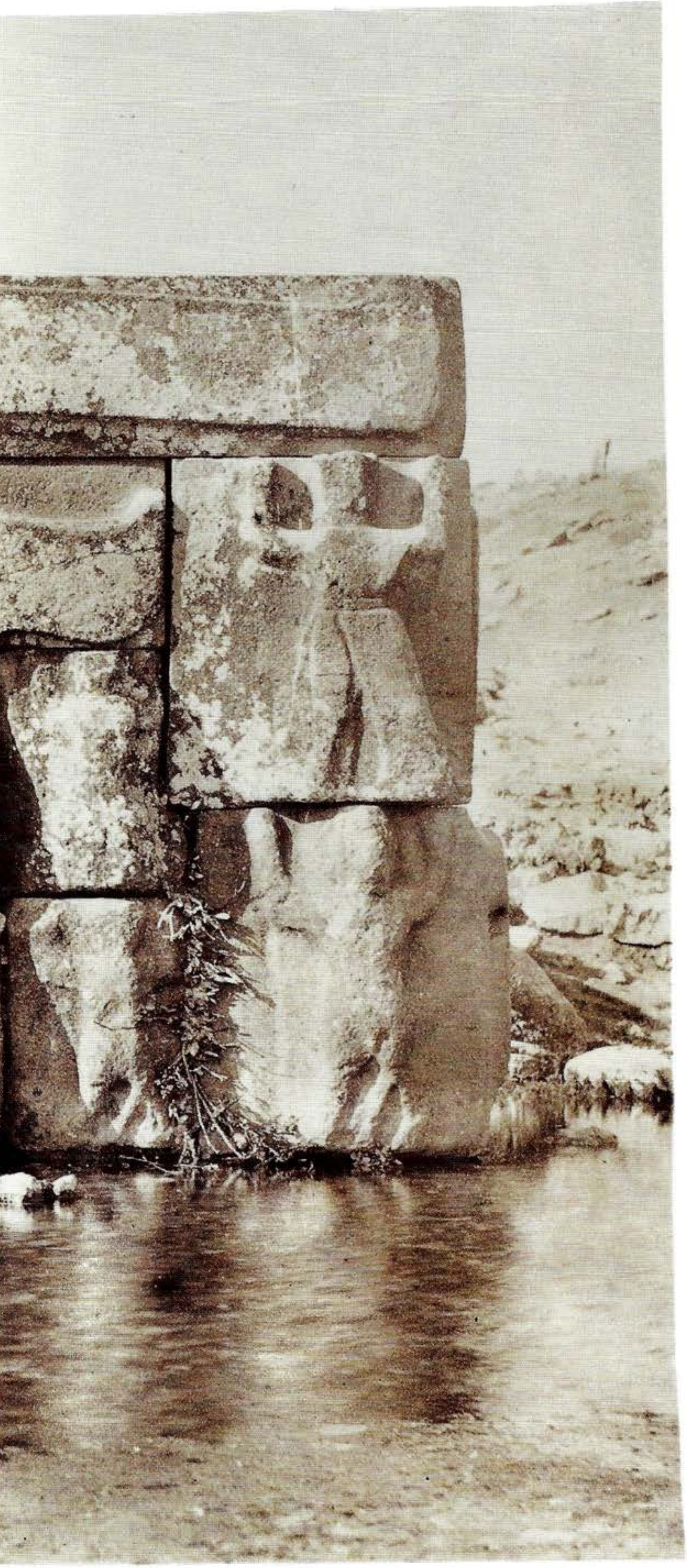
'Altogether these rock formations and the multitude of excavated dwellings... appear to me now the most wonderful thing I have ever been permitted to rest my eyes upon in all my travels and among all the wonderfully interesting things it has been my good fortune to see in the land of wonders'
JOHN HENRY HAYNES (UPM JOURNAL 3, 1884)

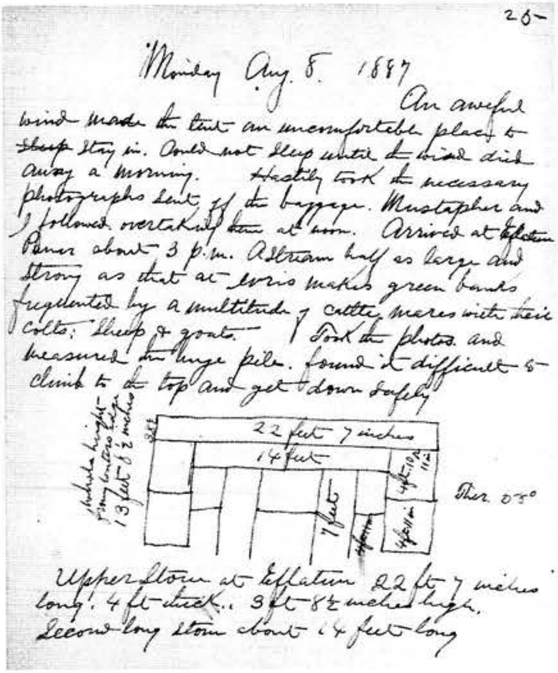


CAPPADOCIA HAYNES COMPARED THE ARCHITECTS OF THESE ROCK-CUT DWELLINGS TO DIODORUS SICULUS'S TROGLODYTES. HIS PHOTOGRAPHS EVENTUALLY APPEARED IN A 1919 ARTICLE BY STERRETT IN 'NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC' MAGAZINE, ENTITLED 'THE CONE DWELLERS OF ASIA MINOR: A PRIMITIVE PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN NATURE-MADE APARTMENT HOUSES FASHIONED BY VOLCANIC VIOLENCE AND TRICKLING STREAMS'. AS USUAL HAYNES WAS NOT GIVEN HIS DUE

HARVARD UNIVERSITY, AGA KHAN ARCHIVES

HARVARD UNIVERSITY, AGA KHAN ARCHIVES





26-

Monday Aug. 8. 1887

An aweful wind made the tent an uncomfortable place to ~~sleep~~ stay in. Could not sleep until the wind died away a morning. Hastily took the necessary photographs sent off the baggage. Mustapha and I followed overtaking them at noon. Arrived at Eflatun Punar about 3 p.m. A stream half as large and strong as that at Ivris makes green banks frequented by a multitude of cattle, mares with their colts, sheep & goats. I took the photos. and measured the huge pile. found it difficult to climb to the top and get down safely

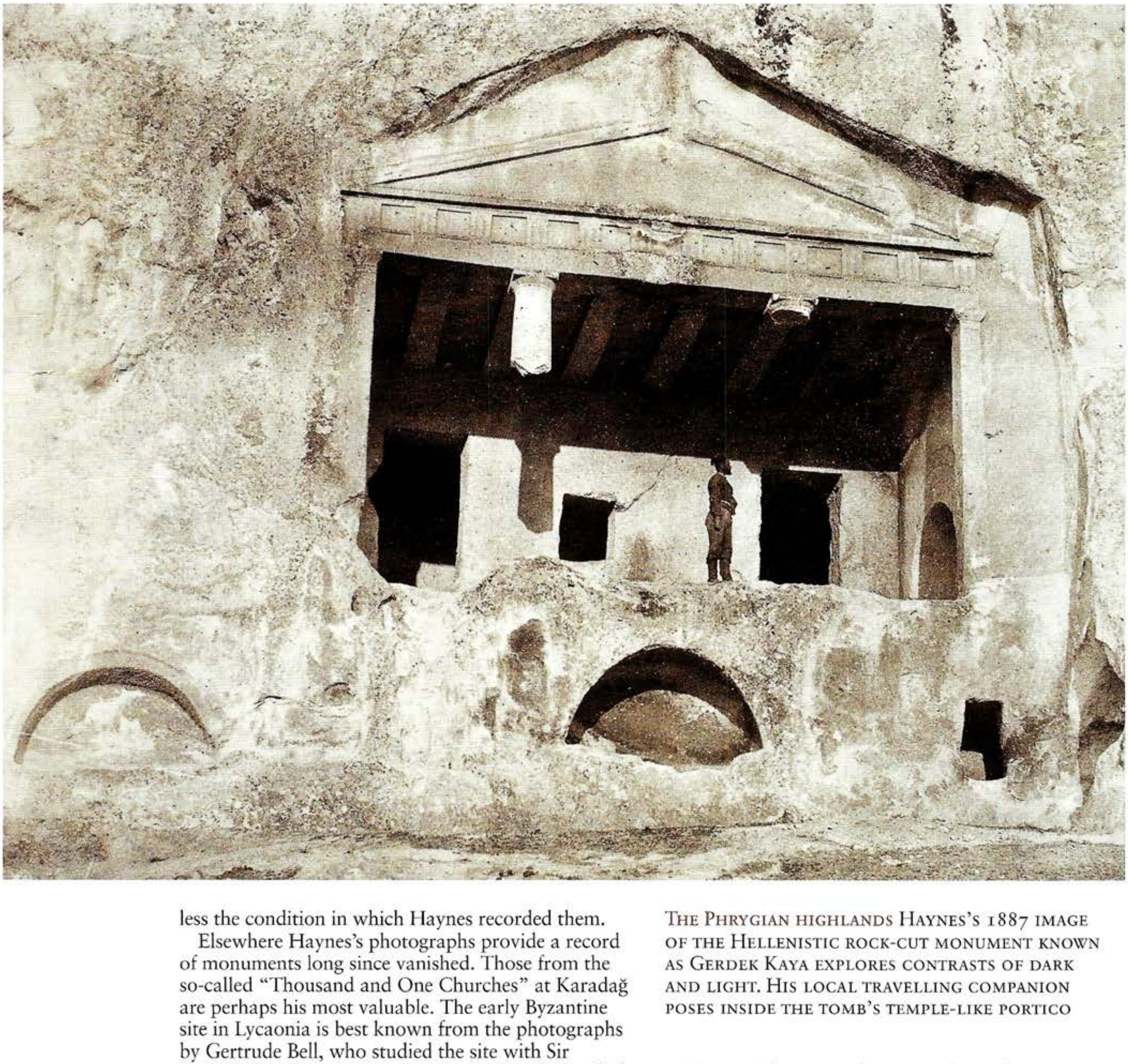
Upper stone at Eflatun 22 ft 7 inches long! 4 ft thick.. 3 ft 8½ inches high.
Second long stone about 14 feet long

Above Haynes's notebook Notes and a drawing of Eflatunpinar, August 8, 1887: although he missed a few measurements, he later realised he could scale them off from the photograph

Left Eflatunpinar On his return to Lake Beyşehir in 1887, Haynes took great care to photograph the monument without the distortions of perspective, even setting up his tripod in the frigid water

had forgotten some of the measurements but determined these could be scaled from the recorded measurements and the photograph – that is, he realised the photogrammetic potential of the camera. At the German excavations at Zincirli, he left his rifle leaning against the relief in an artfully composed photograph. While giving a scale for the carved orthostat blocks, the rifle also provides an amusing visual contrast with the weapon-bearing figure immediately behind it.

The ultimate goal of Haynes's 1887 trip was the highlands of Phrygia, to record the rock-cut monuments around the so-called City of Midas. Photographs of the area had been requested specifically by his patron, and Haynes often cut his journey short elsewhere to hasten towards Phrygia. Most of these monuments survive in more or



HARVARD UNIVERSITY, AGA KHAN ARCHIVES

THE PHRYGIAN HIGHLANDS HAYNES'S 1887 IMAGE OF THE HELLENISTIC ROCK-CUT MONUMENT KNOWN AS GERDEK KAYA EXPLORES CONTRASTS OF DARK AND LIGHT. HIS LOCAL TRAVELLING COMPANION POSES INSIDE THE TOMB'S TEMPLE-LIKE PORTICO

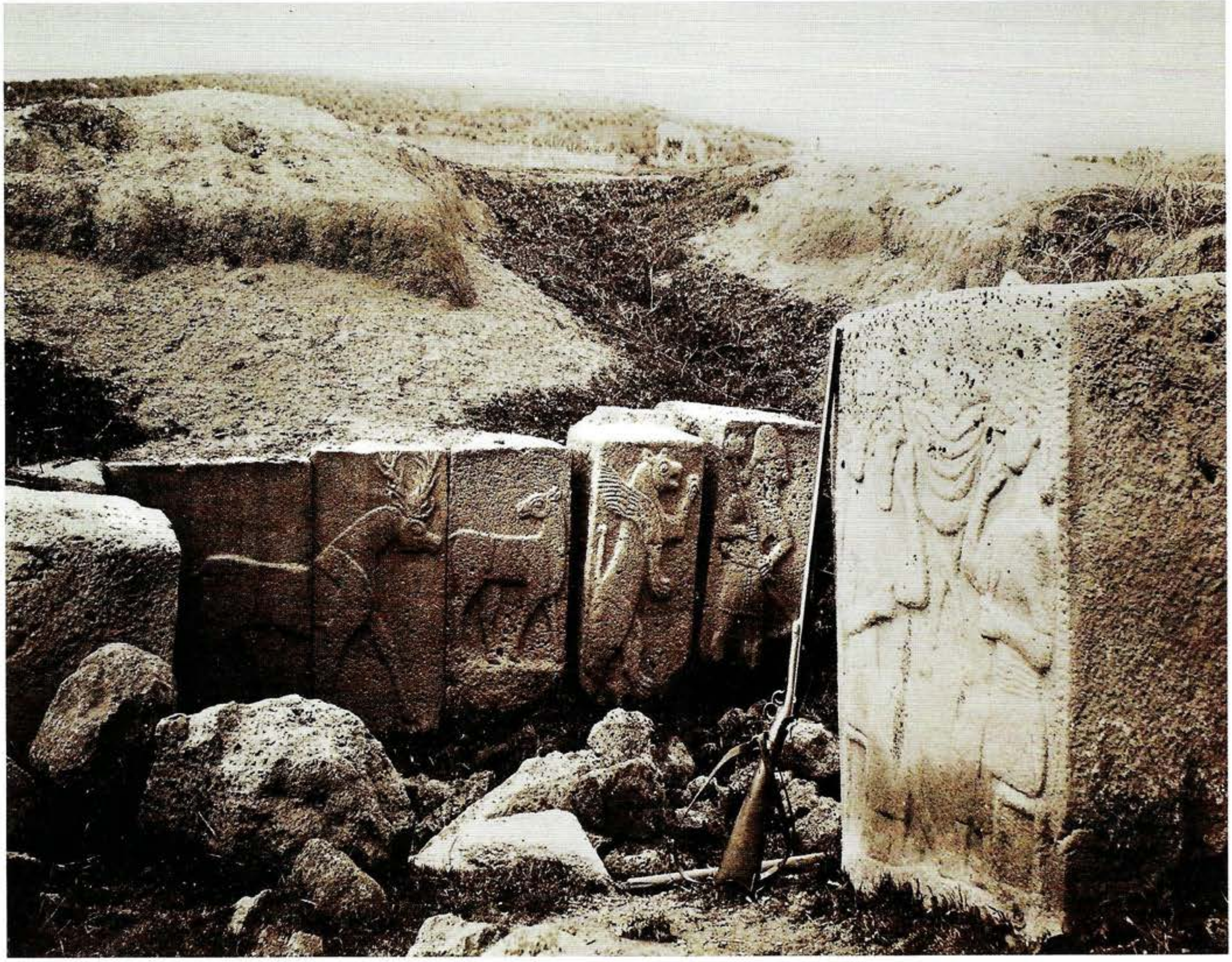
less the condition in which Haynes recorded them.

Elsewhere Haynes's photographs provide a record of monuments long since vanished. Those from the so-called "Thousand and One Churches" at Karadağ are perhaps his most valuable. The early Byzantine site in Lycaonia is best known from the photographs by Gertrude Bell, who studied the site with Sir William Ramsay in 1907. But an earthquake levelled many of the buildings before Bell arrived on the scene. Church Number 8 had fallen but was still recognisable, while others photographed by Haynes had been subsequently reduced to piles of rubble. Church Number 8 has long been of interest to scholars because of its similarities to the martyrium described by Gregory of Nyssa. Haynes's is our only photographic record of it fully standing, and, as is typical of Haynes, his travelling companions are posed in the windows.

Unfortunately, Haynes had to cut short his visit to Binbirkilise on August 3, 1887, having photographed only five of its buildings. He wrote in a letter to Ware, two years later: "Since there was no water within several miles and the sun was very hot I could only take a few photographs as speedily as possible and hasten away to join the caravan..." More critically, it seems, there was no food for the horses.

Haynes's letter stands as something of a swansong for his travel photography. He envisaged a folio of images, which two years after the trip he was still unable to produce. "Neither money nor leisure nor books are at my command. In these days of the rapid growth of scholarship... to write anything of permanent value, one must consult the writings of others..." In a letter of March 17, 1886, he begs Brother Peet, a missionary at the Bible House in Constantinople, to sell him Hamilton's Researches in Asia Minor. Apparently he was unsuccessful – the book remains in the Bible House library.

By 1889, Haynes had become drawn into the isolated and problematic excavations at Nippur, and these consumed – some might argue, destroyed – the remainder of his career. After he was distracted by his lack of resources at Aintab and his responsibilities at Baghdad and Nippur, his folio appeared finally in 1892, but it never saw wide distribution.


UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA MUSEUM ARCHIVES

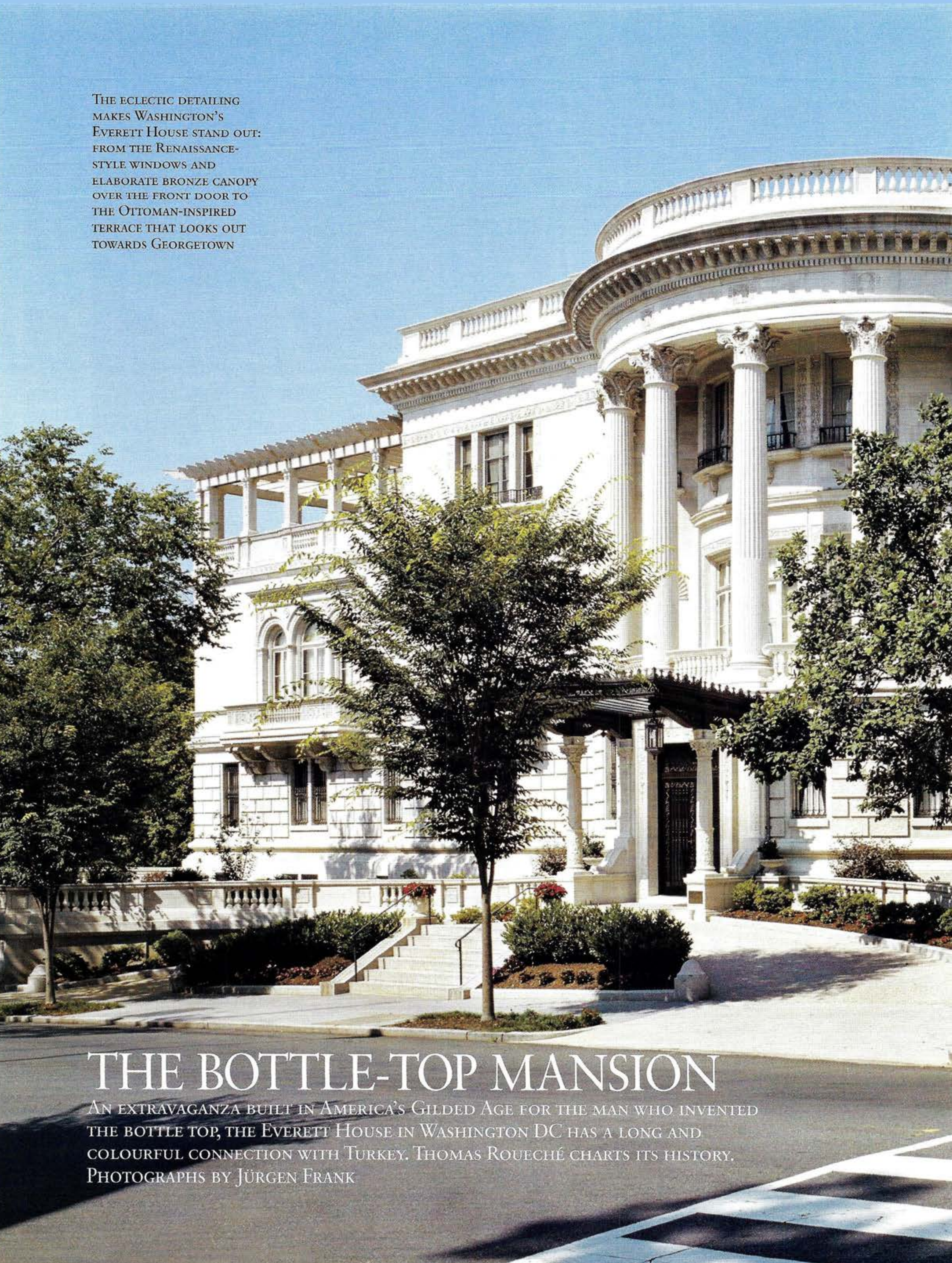
ZİNCİRLİ, A SYRO-HITTITE CITADEL IN THE ANTI-TAURUS MOUNTAINS OF SOUTH-CENTRAL TURKEY, WAS STUDIED BY OTTO PUCHSTEIN IN 1883 AND SUBSEQUENTLY EXCAVATED BY THE GERMANS. OSMAN HAMDİ BEY HAD ENCOURAGED THE AMERICANS TO EXCAVATE THE SITE, BUT THEY ARRIVED TOO LATE. THE CARVED STONE SLABS LINING THE GATEWAY OF THE CITADEL WERE FOUND IN THEIR ORIGINAL POSITION. IN THIS PHOTOGRAPH, HAYNES USED HIS GUN FOR SCALE

Nevertheless, it is curious how Haynes has remained obscure and his photographs unknown. Haynes often had financial support from the American Institute of Archaeology, and there is a long correspondence with Charles Eliot Norton on the subject. I suspect that copies of his photographs went to prominent university collections, besides those at Penn and Harvard, which were both acquired long after Haynes's death. Some may still exist but remain unidentified, owing to the general obscurity of the photographer, who died "Broken in Body and Spirit", as his obituary read in the June 29, 1910 *North Adams Evening Transcript*, unrecognised for his many accomplishments. Why?

The fault may lie partly with Haynes, who saw himself as an archaeologist, a profession in which he was always overshadowed by others. In spite of his discerning eye and his artistic sensibility, Haynes understood his photography to be little more than a tool of the trade. We now view photography as a more complex process, for the lens of the camera looks both ways, telling us as much about the person behind it as it does about the subject in front of it. From his writings, Haynes remains something of a cipher, at best a wordy dullard. His photography tells a much richer human story, revealing both a sensitive personality and an archaeological vision. On the centenary of his death, the rediscovery of John Henry Haynes is long overdue. ◆

The photographs of John Henry Haynes are part of the exhibition 'Archaeologists & Travelers in Ottoman Lands' at the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, Philadelphia (from September 26). For more information, www.penn.museum. The exhibition will travel to the Pera Museum in Istanbul in 2011

ROBERT OUSTERHOUT *is professor in the History of Art at the University of Pennsylvania and a regular contributor to* CORNUCOPIA; *ousterob@sas.upenn.edu*



The eclectic detailing makes Washington's Everett House stand out: from the Renaissance-style windows and elaborate bronze canopy over the front door to the Ottoman-inspired terrace that looks out towards Georgetown

THE BOTTLE-TOP MANSION

An extravaganza built in America's Gilded Age for the man who invented the bottle top, the Everett House in Washington DC has a long and colourful connection with Turkey. Thomas Roueché charts its history. Photographs by Jürgen Frank

The Bottle-Top King approached the architect George Totten Jr with a simple brief: 'Spend and dream'. 'Cost is no object,' he said, 'and the style and design are up to you'

It is hard to miss the Everett House, just off Dupont Circle, in the heart of the great avenues of Washington DC's Northwest district. The mansion, formerly the Turkish embassy in the United States, and today the ambassador's residence, gleams resplendently – easily surpassing the other late-19th-century wedding cakes that surround it. Like Hearst Castle in San Simeon or Citizen Kane's fictitious Xanadu, this is imperial American architecture of the Gilded Age: haphazardly filled with priceless porcelain, paintings and murals; fireplaces big enough to live in; and an eclecticism that flagrantly mixes styles, periods and motifs – all washed down with indecent quantities of gold leaf.

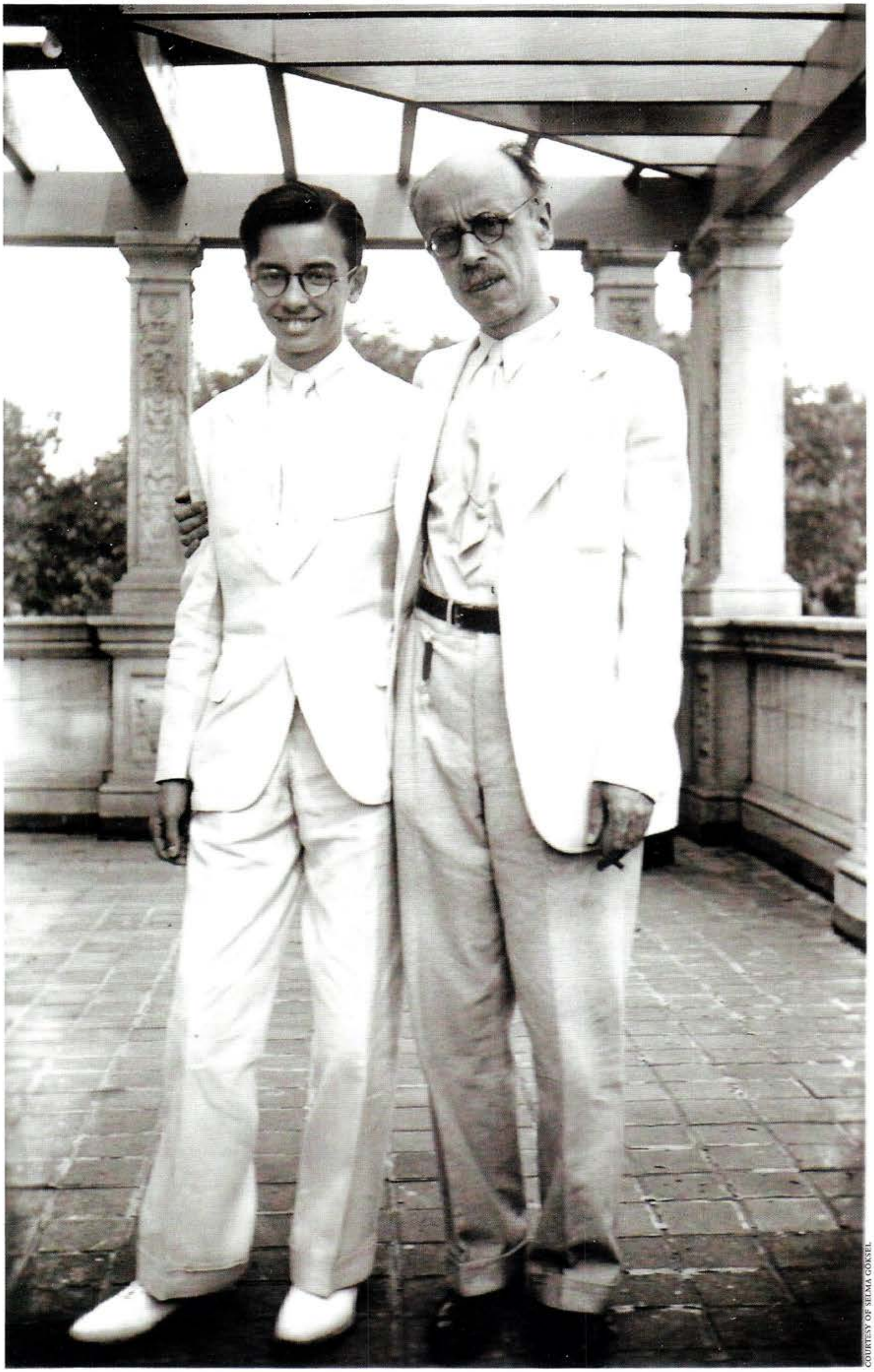
The man who built the mansion, Edward Hamlin Everett, was a mogul from Cleveland, Ohio who had invented the bottle top, earning the nickname "the Bottle-Top King". This was the era of American oligarchs: the newspaper magnate William Randolph Hearst was setting the get-rich-quick tone of the age, and oil and rail barons such as the Vanderbilts were rapidly dominating both politics and high society. From the Gilded Age, chronicled so acerbically by Edith Wharton and Henry James, come the great mansions of the USA, such as Biltmore in South Carolina, and the great summer "cottages" of Newport, Rhode Island, which herald a new scale of architecture among the ruling class. Like those of his rivals, Edward Hamlin Everett's Washington palace was a place to display his new-found wealth and power. The mansion became a social and political statement made all the more weighty by its overwrought architecture.

His chosen architect, George Oakley Totten Jr, was a graduate of the Paris École des Beaux-Arts and, like many from that school, a master of the eclecticism popular in the first decade of the 20th century. Uniquely, however, he had spent time in Istanbul, in the employ of both the sultan and the grand vizier. Totten had travelled to the Ottoman Empire in 1908 to construct the chancery of the American embassy – an annexe to the Palazzo Corpi that is still visible today. While there he was commissioned to build a grand residence for İzzet Pasha, a prominent figure in the court of Sultan Abdülhamid II, later to be grand vizier. Abdülhamid himself then employed him as "Private Architect to the Sultan", but before Totten could accede to this position, the sultan was ousted in the Young Turk Revolution of 1909. Returning to Washington DC, Totten quickly became the darling of those seeking statement architecture in the city's fashionable Northwest. The Bottle-Top King approached him with a simple brief: "Spend and dream". "Cost is no object," he said, "and the style and design are up to you."

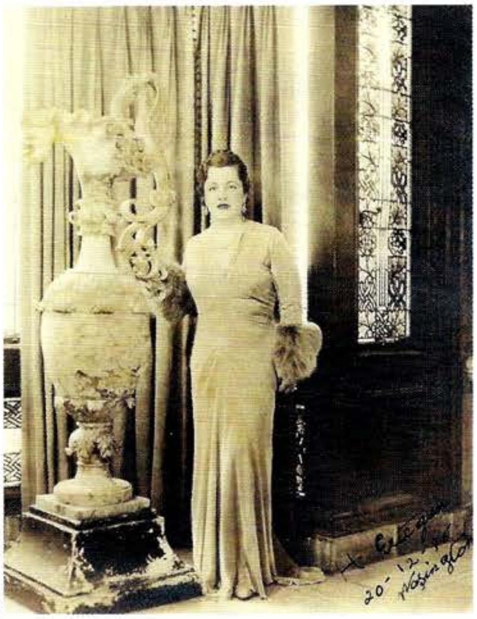
The resulting edifice, erected on the site of a former city dump, exemplifies Totten's peculiar genius for eclecticism. As one critic remarked, "Totten designed spaces as individually and stylistically unrelated to the exterior as they were to each other." The effect is garishly sumptuous. As one moves past the Neoclassical façade, rooms jump from Baroque to Ottoman to Renaissance to Art Nouveau styles, studiously maintaining their individual integrity against each other. "There is something more to architectural style than mere decorative detail. This point George Oakley Totten often failed to understand," sniffed another critic. Certainly, compared with that of his contemporary, Frank Lloyd Wright, Totten's work seems shockingly anachronistic.

Yet such criticisms are beside the point. What Everett sought was a house that would display his wealth to guests and his power to those who came to broker deals with him. After its completion in 1915, the building rapidly acquired the nickname "San Simeon on the Potomac", a reference to Hearst's castle in California, where film stars and politicians frolicked in gardens filled with zebras and halls stuffed with priceless art bought in bulk. In Washington, Everett became famous for his lavish musical parties, at which he and his wife, the opera singer Grace Burnap, would sit on matching Art Nouveau chairs. The house was stuffed with

OPPOSITE OUTSIDE THE FRONT DOOR, CORINTHIAN COLUMNS AND 16TH-CENTURY-STYLE BALCONIES LOOK OUT OVER THE FRONT GARDEN. DETAILED CARVINGS ARE NEWLY VISIBLE FOLLOWING THE RECENT RESTORATION



COURTESY OF SELMA GÖKSEL



COURTESY OF SELMA GÖKSEL

OPPOSITE MEHMET MÜNIR ERTEGÜN, THE FIRST AMBASSADOR TO LIVE IN THE MANSION, AND HIS SON AHMET STAND ON TOTTEN'S ROOFTOP TERRACE. THE ERTEGÜNS PRIZED ELEGANCE ABOVE HAYRÜNİSA ERTEGÜN CUTS A GLAMOROUS FIGURE IN THE CONSERVATORY. THE HOUSE WAS BOUGHT WITH ALL ITS CONTENTS; THIS LARGE URN WAS JUST ONE OF THE MANY ANTIQUES LEFT OVER FROM THE DAYS OF THE BOTTLE-TOP KING

lavish acquisitions, including two Bronzino paintings that hang casually in the stairwell and a unique collection of Sèvres porcelain. Totten's other buildings in the city – the Pink Palace, the Hague House (now the Cameroonian embassy), the Moran House (now the Pakistani embassy) – would all act as stages for the extravagant social parties and fervid political machinations that defined turn-of-the-century Washington. This world would not last. The Great Depression brought an end to the glamorous social circuit, and the great palaces of the magnates became embassies, ambassadorial residences and consulates.

After the death of Edward H Everett, his much younger widow, Grace Burnap, approached the Turkish government with the offer of renting out the mansion. The ambassador from Turkey, Mehmet Münir Ertegün, moved in with his family in 1934. They would stay for the next ten years. The republic eventually bought the mansion, fully furnished with Everett's antiques.

Arguably the Ertegün family exemplifies all the successes of Turkey in the 20th century. In the dying days of the Ottoman Empire, Mehmet Münir was an up-and-coming international lawyer working as an adviser to the sultan. With the War of Independence, however, he soon found himself playing a key role in Atatürk's Ankara-based government. His diplomatic career took off following his posting as legal adviser to the Lausanne Conference. His first official position was as Turkish observer to the League of Nations in Geneva, followed by postings as ambassador to Paris and London before his appointment to Washington in 1934.

Ertegün's daughter, Selma Göksel, who was born in Paris, remembers travelling to Turkey for the first time that year. The family summered in Heybeliada, one of the Princes Islands near Istanbul before boarding a ship for New York. "It was like heaven. You don't need me to tell you how much it has changed," she says. From there Ertegün, his wife, Hayrünisa, 11-year-old Ahmet and nine-year-old Selma travelled down to the capital. Nesuhi, their elder son, had stayed in Paris, getting to know the jazz music that filled the city.

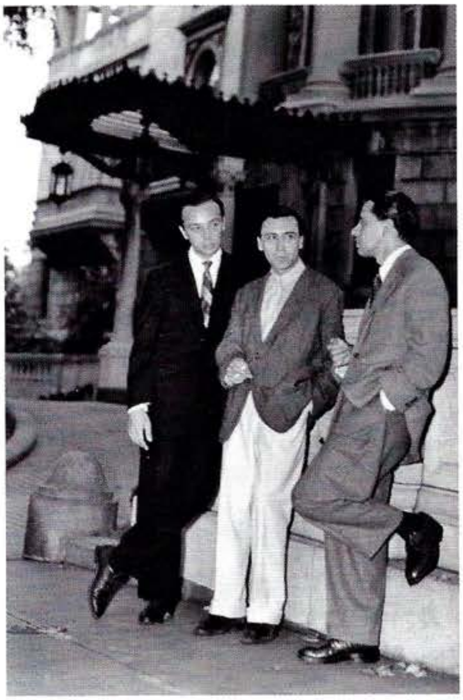
"On our drive through Washington to the embassy, the consul-general played a game with us," Selma Hanım remembers. "As we drove through the rougher neighbourhoods, he would point to the most dilapidated building he could see and say, 'That's the embassy!' and laugh when he saw Ahmet and me looking dejected. So when we arrived at the real thing we couldn't believe our eyes. We ran though the rooms, shouting and laughing. None of the previous embassies had been this beautiful or this big... Size is very important when you're a child."

Ertegün was a quiet, sober, devout man who "would sit in his office and drink his tea in a bowl" – the Uzbek way (his mother had been Central Asian in origin). His melancholy is still almost palpable. The family's summer in Heybeliada in 1934 was their last view of the country until after the war, and Ertegün was never to see Turkey again, as he died before the war ended. Filled with homesickness for the country he represented yet could not see, he would stand for hours at the edge of the balcony, looking east, across the roofs of Washington and Chesapeake Bay towards Europe, towards Turkey.

Hayrünisa Ertegün, with her blonde hair

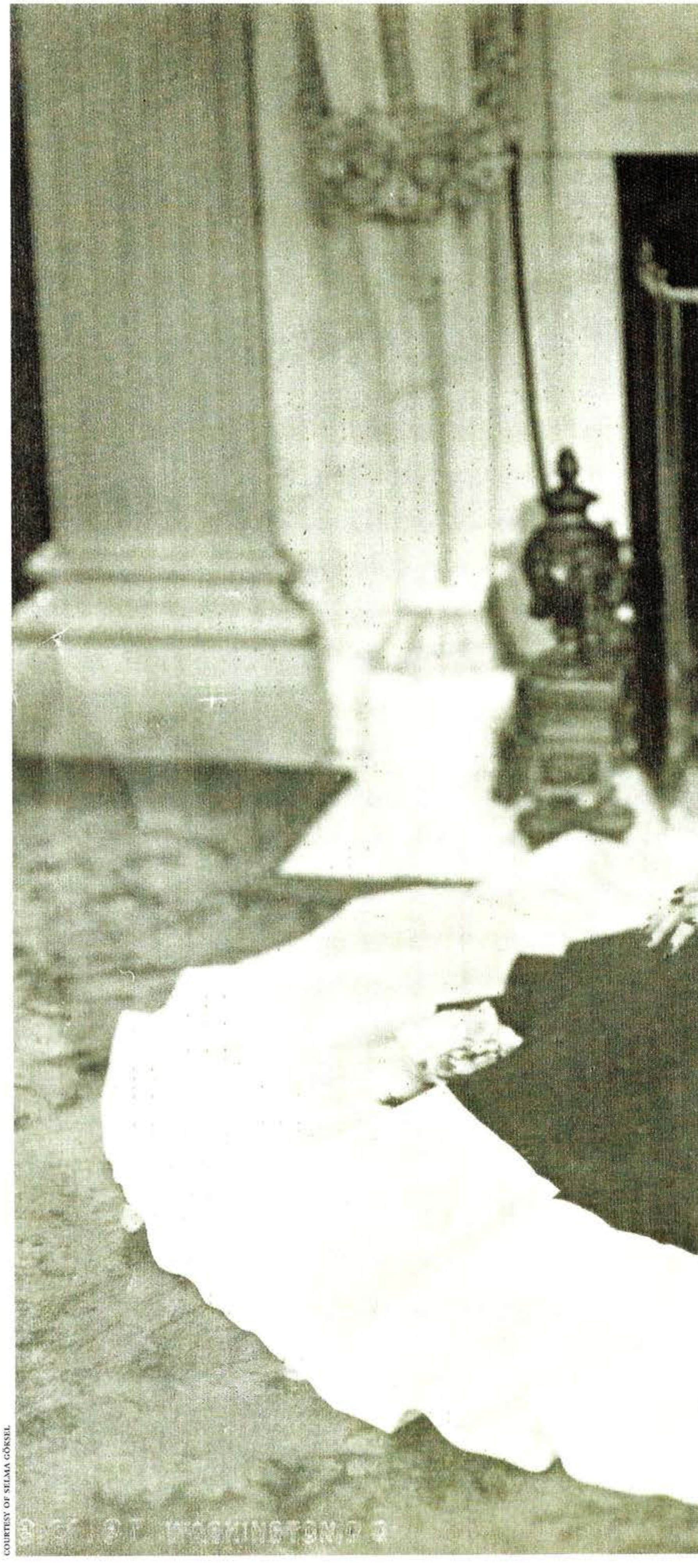
and imposing manner, was more outgoing. She became a social linchpin of Washington society, so much so that on her return to the capital in the 1960s she was fêted, and her visit was written up in all the society columns. Ahmet's naughtiness was legendary. "Once, in Switzerland, our mother was interviewing a new nanny," Selma Hanım, herself a modest, self-effacing figure, recalls. "Ahmet leant over to me and said, 'I don't like her. Watch me!' and crawled over to her and began to slice away at her skirt with a pair of scissors." Needless to say, the nanny didn't stay.

The Ertegün family shared a fondness for ping-pong, which they played in the ballroom. "We were all excellent at it, except for Nesuhi." More significantly, they had music in their blood and carried on the tradition of musical parties started by Everett and his operatic wife. Hayrünisa was herself a great singer, and the family would often cluster round

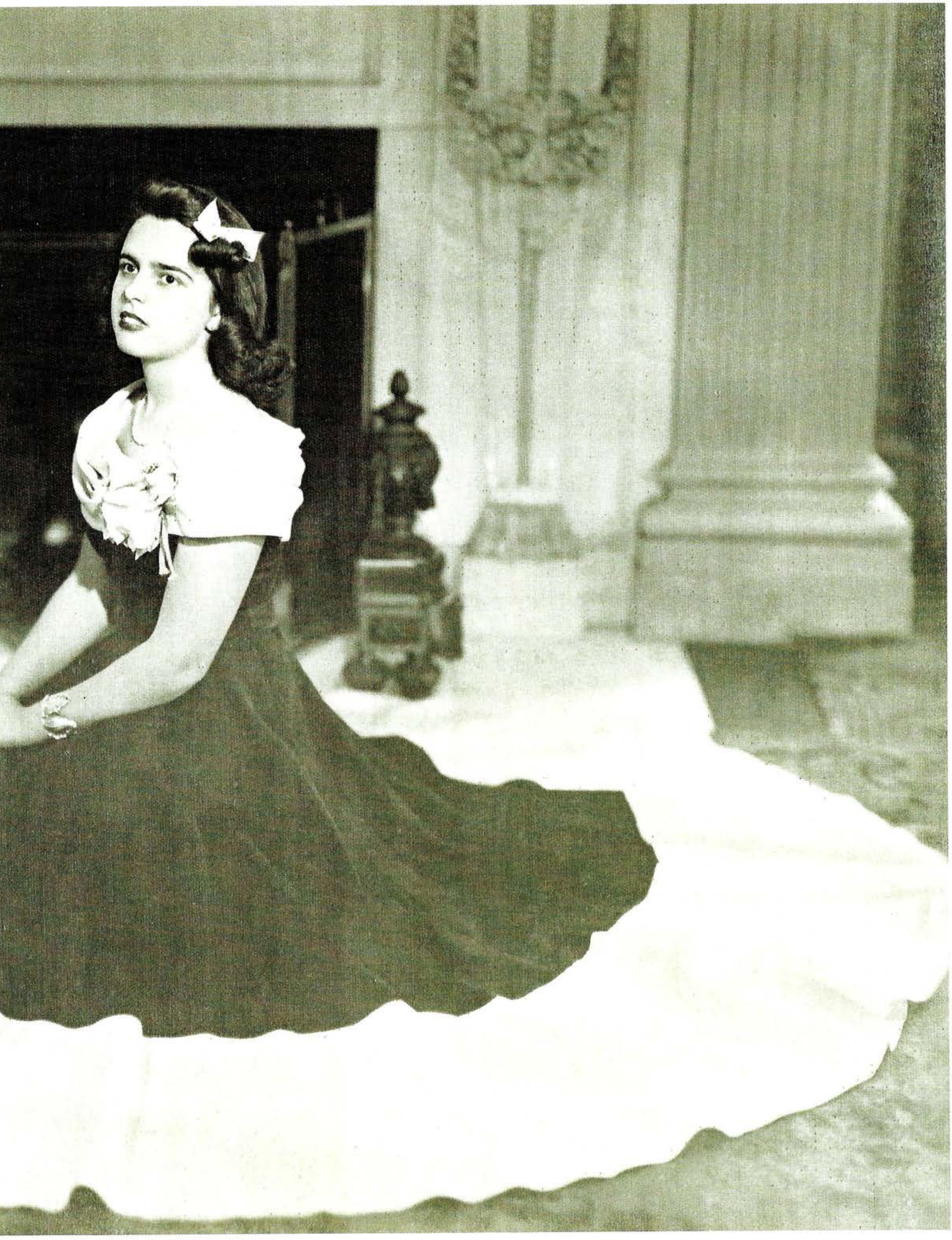


WILLIAM GOTTLIEB/GETTY IMAGES

RIGHT SELMA ERTEGÜN AS A TEENAGER, TRYING ON HER DEBUTANTE'S DRESS. HER COMING-OUT BALL WOULD BE CANCELLED WHEN AMERICA ENTERED THE WAR
ABOVE NEW YEAR'S DAY, 1940: AHMET AND NESUHİ ERTEGÜN WITH THEIR COUSIN THE POET SADİ KOYLAN OUTSIDE THE EMBASSY



COURTESY OF SELMA GÖKSEL

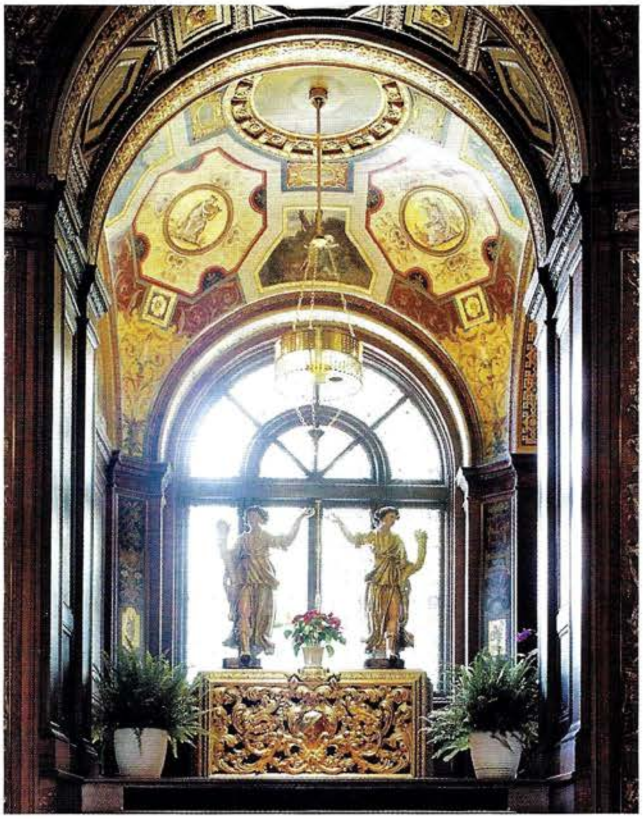


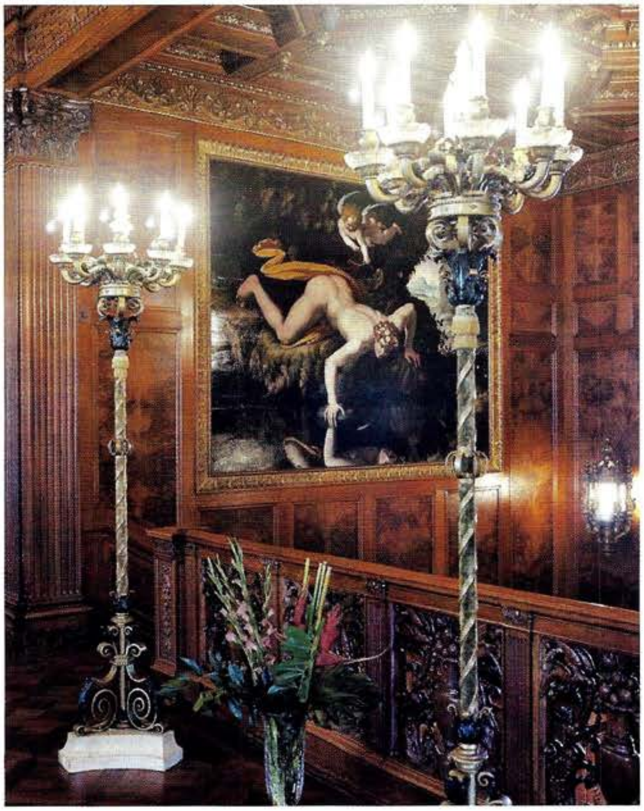
the grand piano in the ballroom. During Ahmet's adolescence, the Bottle-Top Mansion gained its reputation for noise. Under the influence of his elder brother, Ahmet was soon inviting black jazz musicians to come and jam in his bedroom. "In summer we would throw all the windows open because of the heat," says Selma Hanım, "and the Romanian embassy across the road would complain."

The commotion these sessions caused was about more than just the noise, however. "You see, Washington in those days was segregated – like a Southern city. And in the grand houses of a Southern city, black people didn't come in the front door. In fact my father received a letter from a senator informing us that in Washington DC black people use the back door. My father replied, simply: 'In our country our friends enter through the front door. If you should

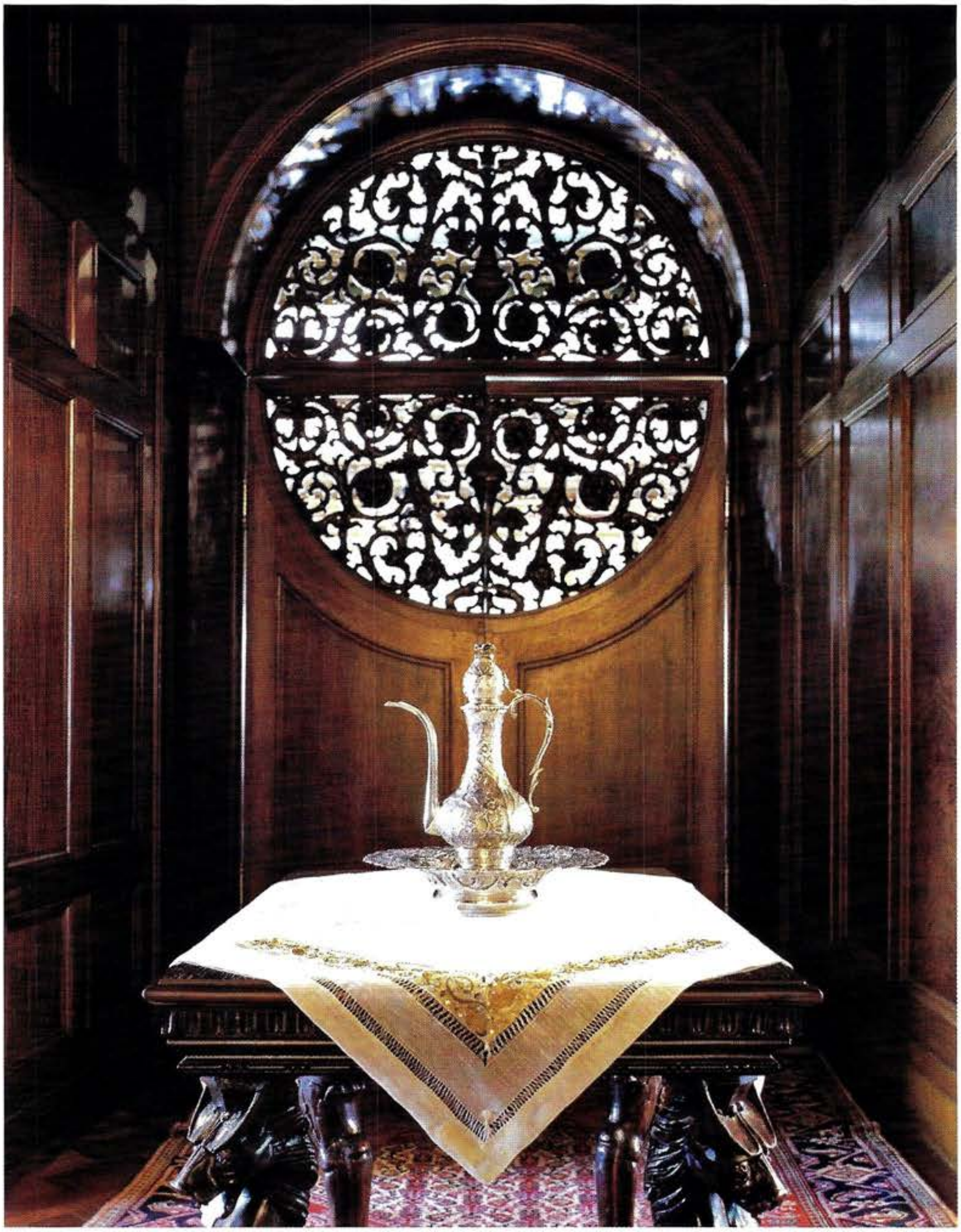
SELMA GÖKSEL COLLECTION

LEFT THE GRAND STAIRCASE LEADS UP FROM THE HALL TO THE RECEPTION ROOMS. IN THE HOUSE'S HEYDAY MUSICIANS WOULD SERENADE ARRIVING GUESTS FROM THE NEO-BYZANTINE MUSICIANS' ALCOVE. ABOVE THE OUTBREAK OF WAR KEPT ERTEGÜN IN HIS WASHINGTON POST. HOMESICK, HE WOULD GAZE WISTFULLY OUT OVER THE ROOFTOPS TOWARDS TURKEY





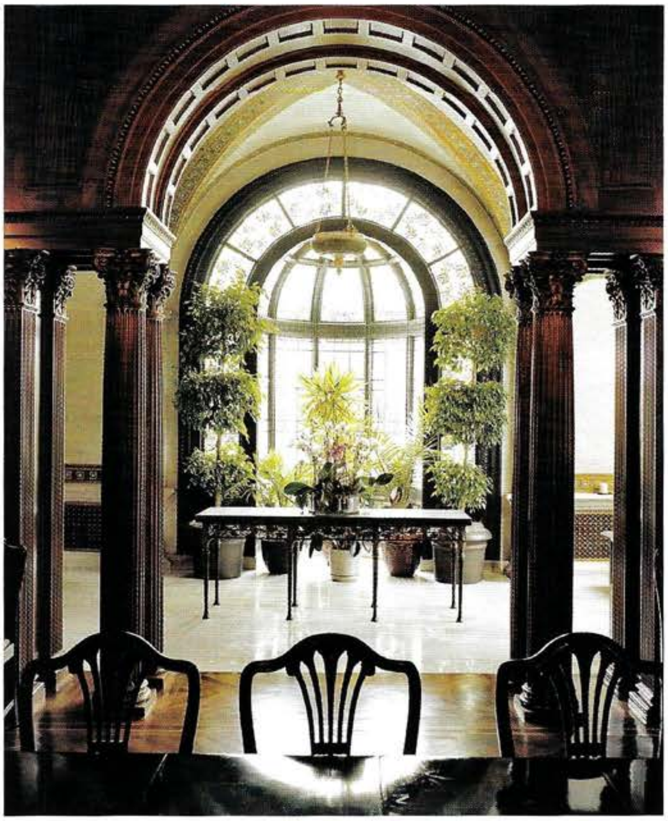
ABOVE AND RIGHT The staircase is hung with two paintings by the 16th-century Mannerist painter Bronzino, 'Narcissus' and 'The Flight from Troy'. TOP Two archangels stand on a gilded chest in the musicians' alcove



ever come to visit us, you can feel free to use the back door.'"

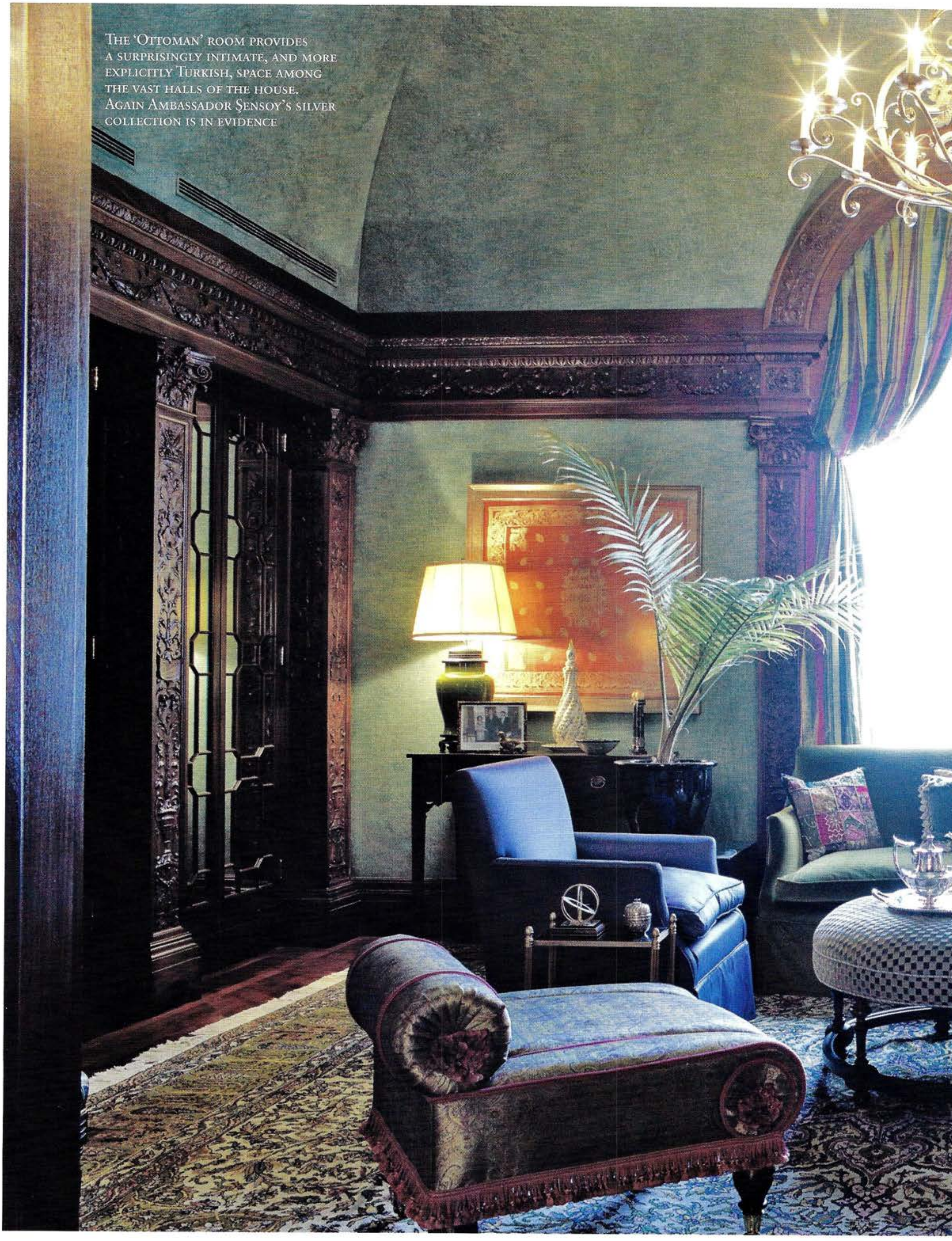
Selma Hanım is still full of stories that illustrate life in the Washington of the Thirties and Forties. In the winter of 1941 her mother arranged for her coming out as a Washington debutante at the embassy. A dress was made, invitations sent. But the declaration of war on December 11 meant that the party had to be cancelled, much to the young girl's dismay. Selma's best friend at school, Anne Curzon-Howe, was set to travel back to Britain, despite the danger such a trip would entail. At school assembly they "sang the sailor's hymn *For Those in Peril on the Sea*. Anne reached for my hand and squeezed

ABOVE THE ORNATELY CARVED DOOR TO THE BALLROOM SETS OFF ISTANBUL SILVERWARE BELONGING TO NABİ ŞENSOY, UNTIL RECENTLY THE AMBASSADOR, WHO COMPLETED THE HOUSE'S RESTORATION IN 2009
OPPOSITE THE GILDED AGE TAKES ON THE RENAISSANCE IN THE BALLROOM, WHERE THE ERTEGÜNS PLAYED PING-PONG: THE WALLS ARE COVERED WITH A 19TH-CENTURY SILK TAPESTRY BASED ON A 16TH-CENTURY PATTERN, AND THE CEILING'S ORNATE CARVINGS ARE COVERED IN GOLD LEAF



LEFT AND ABOVE The sumptuous rooms bear witness to Everett's taste. Today, massive crystal chandeliers hang above huge candelabra on the Hepplewhite dining table

The 'Ottoman' room provides a surprisingly intimate, and more explicitly Turkish, space among the vast halls of the house. Again Ambassador Şensoy's silver collection is in evidence



it and I could tell how terrified she was".

Mehmet Münir Ertegün is considered an important force in advocating Turkey's neutrality during the war, but his role as the country's representative was a hard one. When he suffered a heart attack on the morning of October 29, 1944, there was no question but that he should attend the Republic Day reception at the embassy that evening. "He shook hands for two hours before going back to bed. He never recovered, and died two weeks later, on November 11."

The body of Mehmet Münir Ertegün was interred in Arlington Cemetery until after the war, when it was taken back to Turkey with great fanfare on the USS Missouri – a grand gesture about which Selma Hanım has no illusions. "Of course it was a great honour, but it was a political move. The Cold War was starting and we [Turkey] were more important than ever." Selma and her mother returned to Turkey with the body; Selma was to marry and settle in Ankara. The Ertegün brothers, meanwhile, eschewed diplomatic careers and proceeded to define the sound of popular music, famously bringing black music to white audiences. Ahmet founded the enormously influential Atlantic Records in 1947; Nesuhi joined him a few years later.

The arrival of Faruk and Mevhibe Loğoğlu at the embassy in 2001 would begin the latest phase in the history of the building. The fun-loving, larger-than-life "Mimi" Loğoğlu was famed for her sense of style and dinner parties that would culminate in guests dancing in the ballroom to songs by the pop singer Tarkan. Of all the yearly benefit evenings held at embassies throughout Washington, Mevhibe Loğoğlu says, "We had the highest-priced tickets – because of the building and because of the food!" Yet by this time the mansion was falling apart, with the back of the building subsiding into Rock Creek Park. The Loğoğlus made the decision that a full refurbishment was necessary, which meant relocating to a new, smaller home. "You need space for entertaining... It was a difficult sacrifice."

Mevhibe Loğoğlu took a personal interest in the $20 million restoration, working closely with the interior designer and arriving at the building site every week to inspect progress, dressed head to toe in Turkish designers such as Gönül Paksoy. "I made them keep the swimming pool in the basement. It was being used to store the embassy's archives and they wanted to do away with it, but I made them keep it just the way it was." As the refurbishment continued, astonishing things emerged from the attic, including an enormous Aubusson carpet valued at $1 million but in desperate need of repair. Such items bear small witness to the extreme luxury of the Everett House, "the pearl of Turkey's residences", in Mrs Loğoğlu's words.

ABOVE AND OPPOSITE RELIEF FROM THE HEAVY MAHOGANY TONES OF THE DINING ROOM COMES IN THE AIRY ART NOUVEAU CONSERVATORY, WHICH THE AMBASSADOR'S WIFE, MRS ŞENSOY, KEPT BURSTING WITH ORCHIDS

The refurbishment, begun by the Loğoğlus and finished by their successors, the Şensoys, in 2009, has restored the integrity of the sumptuous mansion George Oakley Totten plucked from Edward Hamlin Everett's dreams and set down on a city dump. From the unique Sèvres porcelain to the painstakingly restored Gobelin wall tapestries, today the building shines in a way it hasn't since its heyday. ◆

CORNUCOPIA wishes to thank the Turkish Foreign Ministry and Ambassador Nabi Şensoy and Mrs Gülgün Şensoy for their kind permission to photograph the Everett House. The photographs from the Ertegün family albums are reproduced courtesy of Mrs Selma Göksel.

Thomas Roueché: diary@cornucopia.net

THERE WAS NEVER A DULL MOMENT GROWING UP IN THE BRITISH CONSULATE IN SIXTIES ISTANBUL. GRISELDA WARR SELECTS PHOTOGRAPHS FROM HER MOTHER'S ALBUM AND TELLS TALES OF SHOOTING STARS, BENIGN ESPIONAGE AND A CALL GIRL WRONGED

ADVENTURES IN ISTANBUL

THE STUFF OF CHILDHOOD DREAMS: A CAR OVERFLOWING WITH TRICYCLES IN THE STREET OF THE COPPERSMITHS, IN BEYAZIT, OUTSIDE THE GRAND BAZAAR, PHOTOGRAPHED BY GILLIAN WARR IN 1964

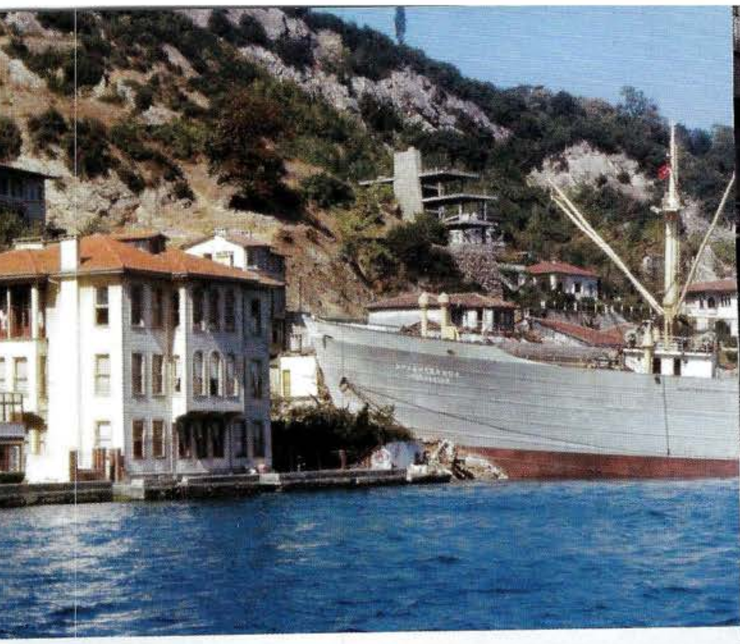
My mother's excited reaction to our time in Istanbul shines out of every page of her letters: "It was a blissful morning unlike any other I've known." It seems that every day offered a new adventure which my parents jumped into, even as they balanced all the work and social obligations required at the massive British consulate.

My parents, Michael and Gillian Warr, had arrived in Istanbul by ship in October 1962 for my father's new job as British consul general. With them were their two daughters, myself, aged 10, Eleanor, six, and our 18-year-old cousin, Rupert, in the role of nanny. In true English fashion, my elder brothers, George and David, at boarding school and college in England, joined us for holidays. We were to live in Istanbul until 1967, and each of us remembers those five years as a fascinating adventure.

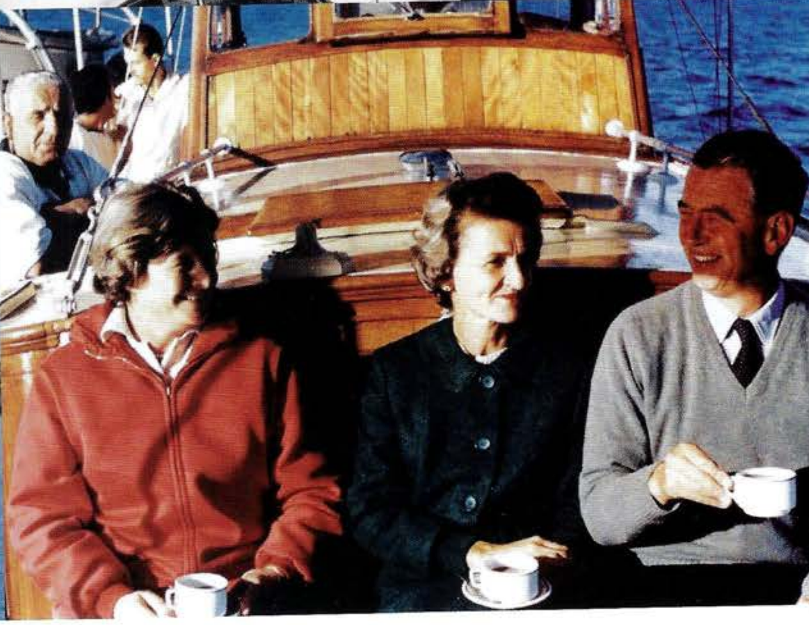
My father had a busy professional life, particularly during major events such as the Cyprus crisis. We had many official visitors from England, as well as diplomats from other countries and other personalities such as the Bishop of Gibraltar. There were also Turkish officials to meet, many of whom became friends, and, though the social requirements of dinner and cocktail parties could be a strain, we soon met a wide range of people and started to explore the city and the country beyond.

'Enterprising students would show up in cars or buses… Late one night, Prince William, elder brother of the present Duke of Gloucester, drove up in a Land Rover with three friends. He had not been told there was a curfew (presumably it was due to the Cyprus troubles) and had been shot at as he drove into Istanbul'

Aside from official visitors, we often had friends and family to stay. In fact it felt as though every person my parents had ever known, and all their friends, came to visit. For such a large house, there were very few bedrooms and my sister and I often slept on old army camp beds in the wide corridors so our visitors might have a bed. In the summer enterprising students would show up in cars or buses (in my cousin's case an old ambulance), heading for India or even further but always happy to spend some time in Istanbul. Late one night, Prince William, elder brother of the present Duke of Gloucester, drove up in a Land Rover with three friends. He had not been told there was a curfew



DÖLER
DOLMUS
İNDİRME-BİNDİRME YERİ
BEKLEME YAPILAMAZ

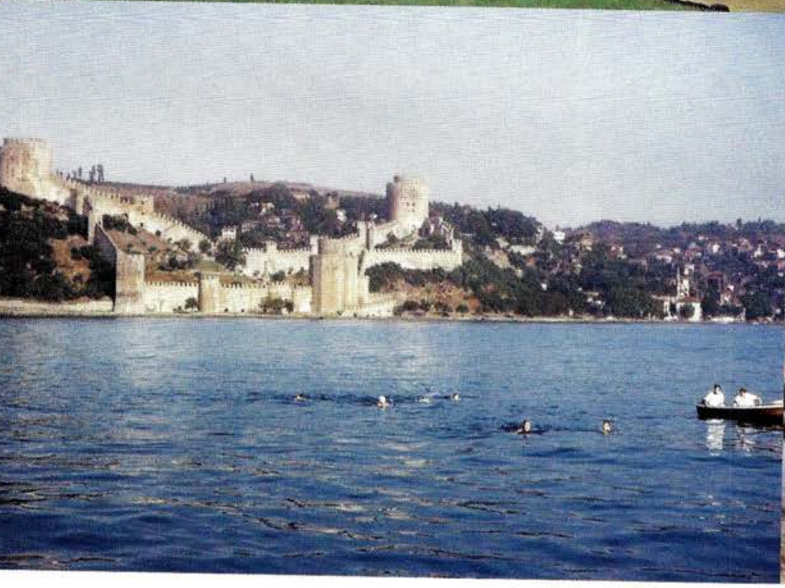


FAR LEFT GODFREY GOODWIN AND A POSSE OF CURIOUS CHILDREN IN A SHANTY TOWN ABOVE SİNAN'S PİYALE PASHA MOSQUE. GOODWIN WAS 'ONE OF THE BEST PEOPLE TO EXPLORE THE CITY WITH'. HIS 'HISTORY OF OTTOMAN ARCHITECTURE' IS STILL THE DEFINITIVE STUDY 30 YEARS AFTER IT WAS PUBLISHED
THIS PAGE, TOP LEFT COLD WAR FROIDEUR TURNED TO ICE WHEN THE RUSSIAN ARKHANGELSK RAN AGROUND AT BALTALİMANI, FLATTENING TWO YALIS AND KILLING THREE PEOPLE
TOP RIGHT FIN PARADE: RANKS OF GAS-GUZZLERS IN İSTİKLÂL CADDESI
ABOVE LEFT THE FOUR WINDS, LAST OF THE BRITISH EMBASSY YACHTS, MOORED IN THE HARBOUR OF BANDIRMA, WITH MARMARA ISLAND BEYOND
ABOVE RIGHT TEA FOR THREE ABOARD THE YACHT – THE AUTHOR'S MOTHER, GILLIAN WARR, AND HER FATHER, MICHAEL WARR, THE BRITISH CONSUL GENERAL, SIT EITHER SIDE OF THEIR AMERICAN FRIEND CLARA RANKIN

(presumably it was due to the Cyprus troubles) and had been shot at as he drove into Istanbul. They arrived at the consulate without injury but had to keep to the curfew for the rest of their visit. My mother wrote to her mother saying she had been very busy at the time and had sent them off on the boat for a day trip with Eleanor. I'm sure Eleanor, seven at the time, was a delightful hostess, though all she remembers is being allowed to steer the boat. Rupert may have been our nanny but he also functioned as a kind of social secretary. He remembers learning how to mix drinks and occasionally taking visitors on tours, though in the early days he hardly knew any history and just kept repeating the date 1453. Both Rupert and our next nanny, Graham, have told me that they were often asked by visiting dignitaries for directions to "iki büçük street" – the red-light district. They are too discreet to name names.

We all learnt the basic greetings and polite phrases in Turkish but, sadly, my Turkish never got beyond that. My parents, however, had Turkish lessons every morning and, though I don't think they ever became completely fluent, they were pleased when they could conduct a conversation in Turkish and delighted to make many Turkish friends. My mother wrote excitedly to her mother: "We are in the paper for our marvellous Turkish and general lovableness!" She continues: "Our particular friend, the Chief of Police, is now Mayor. His wife is a teacher and very nice. He tells us all his troubles. At official parties it is a great help and more fun to really like these people and their wives."

Aliye Berger, the artist, gave my parents a great introduction to the contemporary arts world, as well as a fabulous social life. She was a member of an extraordinarily gifted family of artists and writers, and also knew dancers, poets and painters. Her studio was close to the consulate and we bought several of her prints. I remember her cousin Shirin, the actress, who performed spectacular dives from the top of the embassy's yacht, the Four Winds, and was also very fond of my father's snuff. Aliye's niece, Füreya Koral,



Top left The cottage on the estate of the old British summer embassy at Tarabya. Summer days were spent swimming in the fast currents of the Bosphorus and nights sleeping under the stars
Top right The view to the Black Sea in winter. Monsieur Georges, the chef, would scoop up shoals of fish from the seashore
Above left The consul general and friends swim the Bosphorus at Rumeli Hisari, under the watchful eye of the dinghy of the Four Winds. The crossing was over in 35 minutes; 'they gambolled like porpoises,' wrote his wife in a letter home
Above right The bay of Bebek
Far right A shipbuilder's yard on the seafront at Üsküdar. Beyond is Sinan's 16th-century Şemsi Pasha Mosque

was a ceramicist. Of the whole family, I remember her best as she would let my brother George and me make our own creations in her studio. She herself made brightly coloured pieces which she sprinkled with chips of broken glass before firing to produce gorgeous bubbles of colour.

One of our family's more eccentric new Turkish friends was Nuri Arlasez, always known as Nuri Bey. He would take us to visit some of the city's more obscure sites, but we had to pay the price of listening to his endless "philosophy" quotes in broken English, such as: "You may say, why has this beautiful mosque been allowed to crumble? The Eastern philosophy say, 'Man must die, why should stones aspire to immortality?' Is that not a beautiful thought?" It must have been a relief for my parents to be able to talk to him in Turkish. Whenever we arrived at some new site, he would exclaim "See the beauty!" which became a family catch phrase. But he did know the city well. He also had an unusual collection of manuscripts and embroideries in his tiny flat in Ortaköy. He knew the ebru masters Necmettin Okyay and Mustafa Düzgünman, and I still have many of the flower images on marbled paper. I'm sorry that I never met the artists. Years later I learnt how to marble paper and found out how hard it is to produce those images. I was always interested in crafts and loved the fine embroideries. I also remember the manuscripts – in particular a miniature hexagonal Koran, made to be carried into battle. Nuri Bey's manuscript collection is now in the Süleymaniye Library, but I don't know what happened to the embroideries.

One of the best people to explore the city with was Godfrey Goodwin, who took friends on walking tours and was an extraordinarily kind, amusing and generous man. No one knew more about the architecture and history and, with his amusing asides and stories, no one could describe it better. We would always tease my mother that she photographed nothing but little boys and wooden houses, and she found plenty of both on these walks. Now I am pleased to have records of those beautiful doomed

houses, and the boys were often good sources of information. Godfrey and his wife, Gillian, remained very good friends, both in Istanbul and, later, in London. Maureen Freely captures him beautifully in her tribute to him in CORNUCOPIA 34.

During the 1960s, Ernest Hawkins was restoring the mosaics in Ayasofya and the Kariye Camii. He, too, became a very good friend and taught us about Byzantine art and much else. He invited us to climb the scaffolding in Ayasofya and I was determined to go, even though I've always been terrified of heights. It was an unforgettable experience and we got within inches of the Virgin and Child in the apse, where craftsmen were consolidating the image, stone by stone. My fears got the better of me as I climbed down, and I remember being frozen with fear. I had to be talked down very slowly. Ernest Hawkins explained the mosaic technique and showed me the gold mosaic pieces, made of a "sandwich" of two pieces of glass with a sliver of gold leaf in between – I was convinced I would be able to find all mosaic supplies in the market. Ernest Hawkins was also a great mimic and could imitate Nuri Bey perfectly. One day in the market my mother was being pestered by a man trying to persuade her to buy a lamp. She ignored him so successfully that she did not notice it was Ernest! He then helped her bargain for an Armenian copper alms dish.

'We went to the kitchen at the Topkapı Palace to see the Chinese porcelain collection… I remember a large blue and white platter being rolled across the wet floor like a cartwheel. I was under the impression that some of the pieces had never been unpacked since their arrival from China centuries before'

My uncle John Addis was also at the Foreign Office and spent most of his career in the Far East, finally becoming the first British ambassador to China after diplomatic relations were resumed in the 1970s. He was an expert on Chinese porcelain, especially Ming. When he came to visit, we went to the kitchen at the Topkapı Palace to see the Chinese porcelain collection. It was an extraordinary day as bowls, plates and ewers were brought out for him to examine and photograph. There was not much light and the flagstone floors were being washed that day (the museum was closed to the public), which not only created a dramatic backdrop but also made the whole enterprise perilous as there were hoses everywhere and a very wet floor. I remember a large blue and

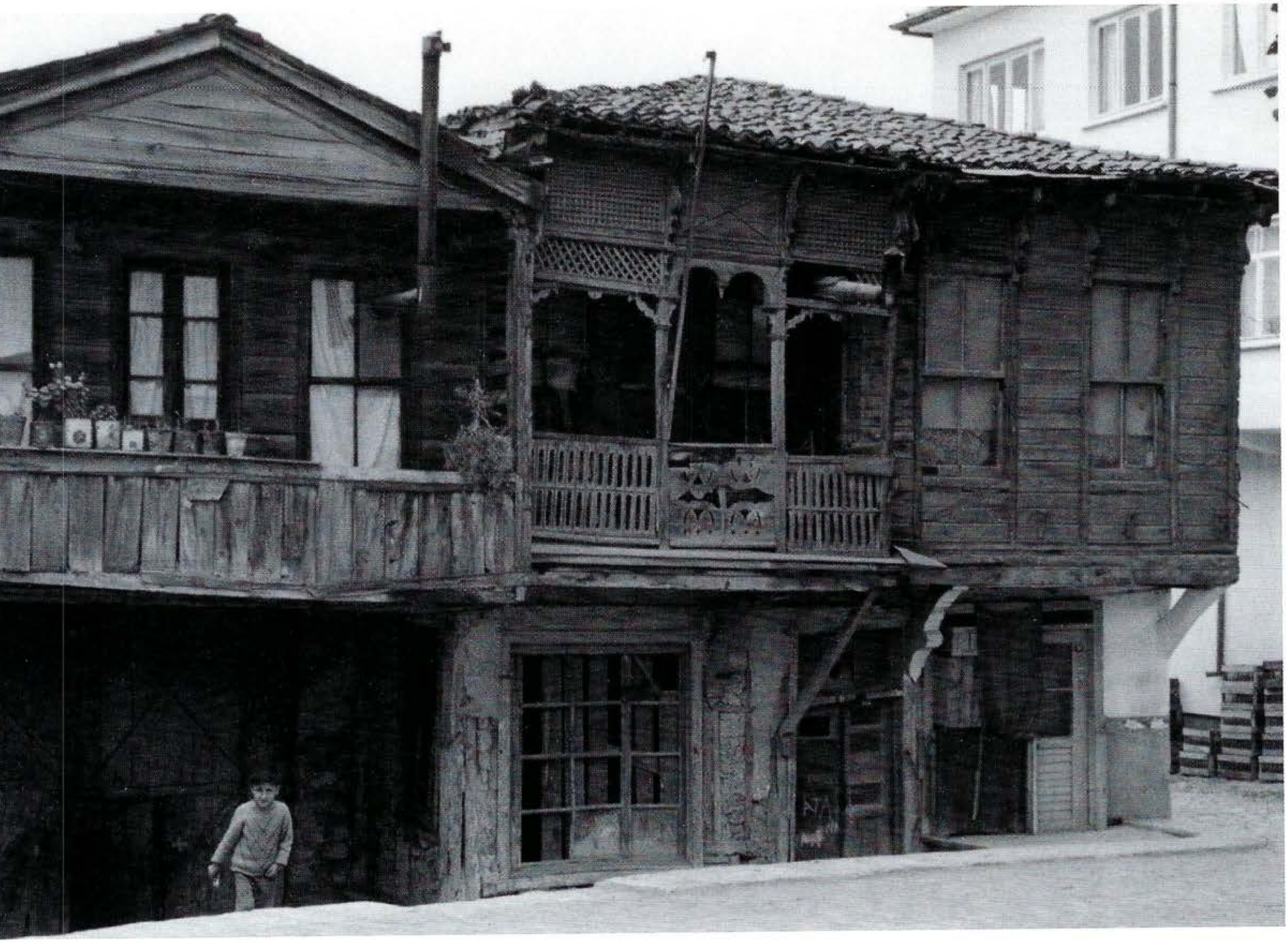
white platter being rolled across the wet floor like a cartwheel. I was under the impression that some of the pieces had never been unpacked since their arrival from China centuries before, but I cannot verify that.

Here is my mother's description of the occasion: "We set off for the Topkapı with masses of strange equipment. All the cupboards swayed as their doors stuck. We found a patch of light and John's Canonet made bad-tempered noises. I had a sponge and cup and washed the bowls, though John was painfully aware of the value of each piece. "I mustn't drop my camera into it," he said. We measured and turned and noted and washed and clicked till he was done." Uncle John left his collection of Chinese porcelain to the British Museum, but it is the Islamic gallery that is named after him.

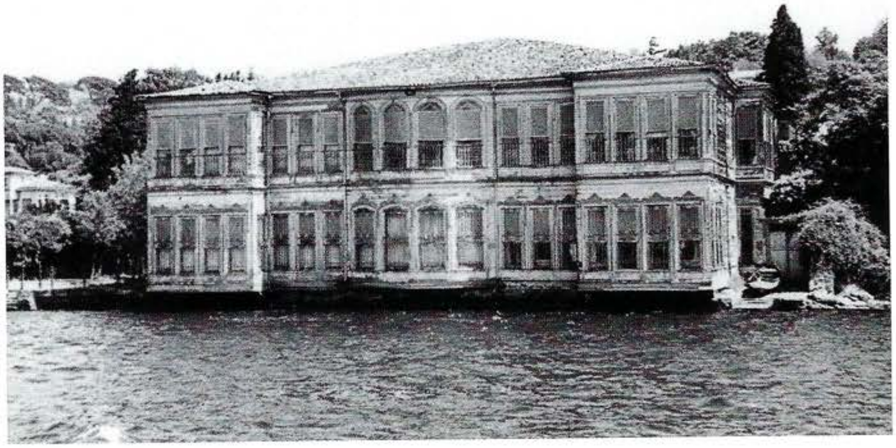
One night in 1965 my father was asked to meet Edward Heath, who was to become prime minister in 1970. They met at the airport, and even though Mr Heath was only going to be there for a couple of hours he wanted to see Ayasofya. In the middle of the night, my father somehow managed to have it opened up. It must have been a dramatic sight and I wish I had been there.

'The Four Winds had a crew of four, headed by the intrepid Captain Vasili. Though she was not really a seagoing boat, and there was some problem with the propellers, gradually our trips grew more and more adventurous – the most magical way to explore the Bosphorus, the Sea of Marmara and beyond'

Up the Bosphorus at Tarabya was the old estate of the summer embassy. This had burned down in 1911 and the only building left was a little cottage on a terrace, with a view up the Bosphorus to the Black Sea. There was no hot water and only two rooms, but we spent the summers there and my father commuted into work each day. We slept outside under the stars, sometimes rows of us, visitors and family. I tried to believe that scorpions really could not climb the metal legs of the camp beds and learnt the names of the constellations – undimmed by the city lights in those days. Our enterprising Greek cook, always referred to as Monsieur Georges, would scoop up shoals of fish from the banks of the Bosphorus with a large net. We swam in the Bosphorus at Tarabya, often letting the current drag us on to the next ladder before climbing up to the coastal road. We called it the "French ladder", but I don't think I had any idea then that this was because it led to the French



ABOVE MODEST AND RAMSHACKLE: OLD HOUSES IN KÜÇÜKÇEKMECE, A VILLAGE ON A LAGOON WEST OF ISTANBUL FAMOUS IN THE FIFTIES AND SIXTIES FOR BEYTİ GÜLER'S LEGENDARY KEBAB SHOP BELOW THE HASİP PASHA YALI IN BEYLERBEYİ, THE MOST ELEGANTLY PROPORTIONED OF THE OTTOMAN YALIS ON THE ASIAN SHORE, BURNT DOWN IN 1974 AND WAS REBUILT



embassy. Our second "nanny", Graham Thompson, also on a gap year, remembers my parents' interest in the wide variety of spring waters. We would collect as many as possible at Tarabya for tasting and comparison – though my father's interest may have been mostly focused on which water tasted best with his whisky.

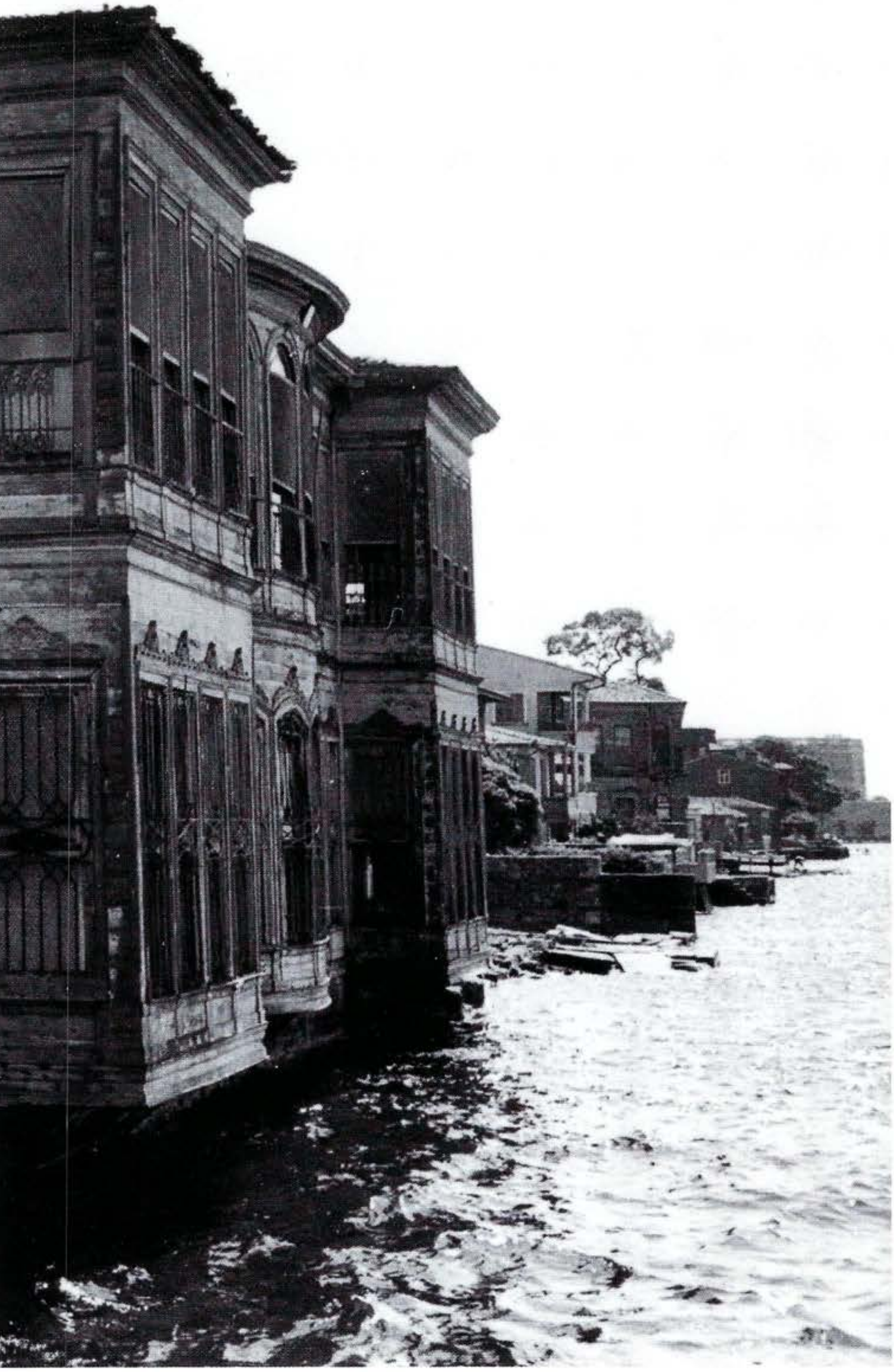
Then there was the Four Winds, which must have been one of the last "embassy yachts" maintained by the Foreign Office. The boat had a crew of four, headed by the intrepid Captain Vasili. Though the Four Winds was not really a seagoing boat, and there was some problem with the propellers, gradually our trips grew more and more adventurous – the most magical way to explore the Bosphorus, the Sea of Marmara and beyond. On weekends we would take friends, consulate staff and official guests on picnics to the Princes Islands and swim from the boat. On longer trips we slept on board – usually on deck, although there were cabins – watching shooting stars and beautiful sunrises. Dolphins would sometimes swim in front of the boat and I would sit in the bow watching for them. When we did drop anchor our captain would take the opportunity to go fishing in the little dinghy, sometimes leaving us marooned for hours.

One day – it was my 11th birthday – HMS Surprise, a British naval frigate serving as an admiral's yacht, appeared in the Bosphorus and we were invited aboard. It looked like a huge battleship to me. Unfortunately Captain Vasili crashed

the Four Winds into it, which must have been humiliating, though no damage was done to either vessel. I remember a church service on deck, in full view of the entire city of Istanbul across the water. There was music and hymns, which seems bizarre, surrounded as we were by minarets. Afterwards there was a lunch party and I was given birthday presents.

Though I don't think the Four Winds ever ventured into the Black Sea itself, we explored every inch of the Bosphorus and swam in the large bay near the mouth of the Black Sea – we called it Jason's Bay, for we decided that it was the place where Jason paused on his search for the Golden Fleece. I remember frequent visits to Arlette and Jimmy Mellaart, and their son, Alan, in the beautiful yalı at Kanlıca which at the time belonged to Arlette's mother and stepfather. The Mellaarts also joined us for several trips on the Four Winds. They came with us to Marmara Island, where we visited the marble quarries and picked up pieces of marble and alabaster. Jimmy always had stories to tell about the history of any place we

'In September 1963, early in the morning, the Arkhangelsk, a large Soviet freighter, crashed into the bank, destroying two houses and killing three people... She was rumoured to be carrying a shipment of guns for Cuba... I remember the crew aiming hoses at us to keep us away'



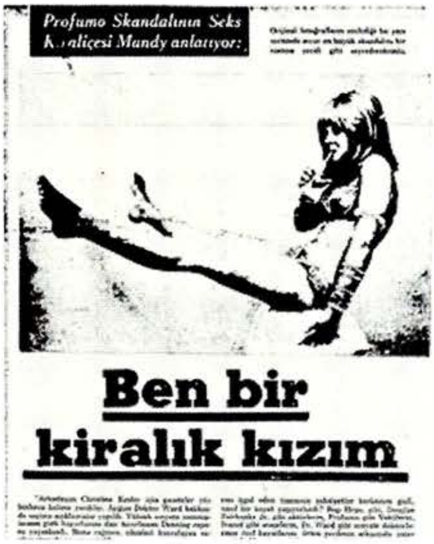
visited. On our return to the Four Winds a fisherman sold us a lobster, which the adults assumed the children wouldn't eat. They were wrong.

The Bosphorus was lined with a wide variety of *yalıs* in those days, some not in good repair, but all romantically beautiful. Early one morning my father and our friends Bob and Aileen Lawson swam the Bosphorus from Rumeli Hisarı, while the Four Winds and its dinghy protected them from the tankers and freighters rushing by. Watching from the Four Winds, it seemed to take them a long time, but my mother's letter says, the swim was over in 35 minutes: "They gambolled like porpoises and made it seem easy."

The Bosphorus was always full of

Left The magnificent Hasip Pasha Yali's curved central bay screened a huge domed drawing room
Above Another Bosphorus ghost, a 'taka' cargo vessel under sail in Kadıköy Bay, with the Selimiye Barracks (Florence Nightingale's hospital) on the left and Haydarpaşa Station on the right

'I remember seeing a photograph of a woman wearing a bathing suit in the Turkish paper, which was very unusual in those days. When I asked about it my father commented drily that it was more than she usually wore'



Profumo Skandalının Seks Kraliçesi Mandy anlatıyor:

Ben bir kiralık kızım

ABOVE 'I'M A CALL GIRL' – MANDY RICE-DAVIES, FROM A 1964 NEWSPAPER CUTTING. THE PAPERS HAD A FIELD DAY WHEN SHE SIGNED UP TO SING IN AN ISTANBUL NIGHTCLUB IN THE WAKE OF THE PROFUMO SCANDAL. 'HÜRRIYET' SERIALISED HER STORY OVER FIVE DAYS. DEPORTATION PROCEEDINGS WERE STARTED AFTER THE JEALOUS OWNER OF A RIVAL CLUB ACCUSED HER OF SINGING LEWD SONGS OPPOSITE CALMER WATERS: FISHING BOATS IN YEŞILKÖY, BETTER KNOWN TODAY FOR ITS INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

tankers and freighters, as well as ferries and small fishing boats. I learnt to identify all the national flags and would watch the fishing boats for hours. In September 1963, early in the morning, the Arkhangelsk, a large Soviet freighter, crashed into the bank at Baltalimanı, destroying two houses and killing three people. Within hours we were on the Four Winds and got quite close to the ship. She was rumoured to be carrying a shipment of guns for Cuba, and to have been going too fast in the early-morning fog, without a pilot. I remember the crew aiming hoses at us to keep us away, but there is no sign of them in the photograph and, in retrospect, hoses do seem a little benign for a Soviet vessel. Orhan Pamuk, the same age as me, describes this accident in his book *Istanbul*. He includes a quote from the survivors: "We were awoken by a terrifying noise. We thought the yalı had been struck by lightning: the building had split in two. It was only luck that saved us. When we pulled ourselves together, we went into our third-floor sitting room and found ourselves nose to nose with a huge tanker." How the ship was removed he does not say, and I do not remember that part of the story, though I think the captain refused help, as he did not want to reveal his cargo.

Sometimes, in the summer, the Four Winds would go to pick up the ambassador in Izmir or Antalya for an official visit, and we would go along for the ride, stopping at every small town and beach on the way. We had all the bays and beaches to ourselves in those days and there were no pleasure boats at all, as I remember. We had masks and snorkels and would explore the rocks for fish and the occasional amphora. If my father was able to join us, he would visit the *vali* and other officials in each town, and we would make side-trips to explore. We visited Tenedos (Bozcaada) and Imbros (Gökçeada) and once made it to Rhodes. I remember being told we were in the footsteps of either St Paul or Alexander the Great. I never knew the difference, but I enjoyed discovering such places as the theatre at Termesos and the mysterious site at Patara, concealed behind the sand dunes of a beautiful but crab-infested beach. Swimming back to the Four Winds, we had to brave an army of them. I don't think there was a road to Patara in those days.

We also drove to the south, usually in the spring, and sometimes rented a *kayık* for the day to explore. We usually travelled with the French consul, and his family – the Simon-Duneaus. They had four children and we were all great friends, chattering away in a mixture of French and English. A few years later my brother David married their daughter Dominique. Our most memorable trip was from Marmaris to Loryma, on the peninsula that reaches out close to Rhodes. Loryma is described by Freya Stark in her book *The Lycian Shore*. She refers to the "trickiness" of the waters, and it certainly was rough. We rented an old *kayık* which also had a sail, but the trip to Loryma took six hours. The boat's last load had been goat manure, but nobody seemed to mind the smell. The coast was very rugged, wild, beautiful

and deserted. My mother describes it: "Loryma smelt unbelievably good, of honey and sun. We climbed all round the walls, wonderful strong walls, wonderful flowers and colours." She says that the journey back took five hours and we got in very late, but it was a memorable trip. There are a few photographs in *The Lycian Shore,* but some soldiers forced Freya Stark to leave, so she did not have much time there. Corrinne, the other Simon-Duneau daughter, remembers my father reading *War and Peace* in Russian on the boat.

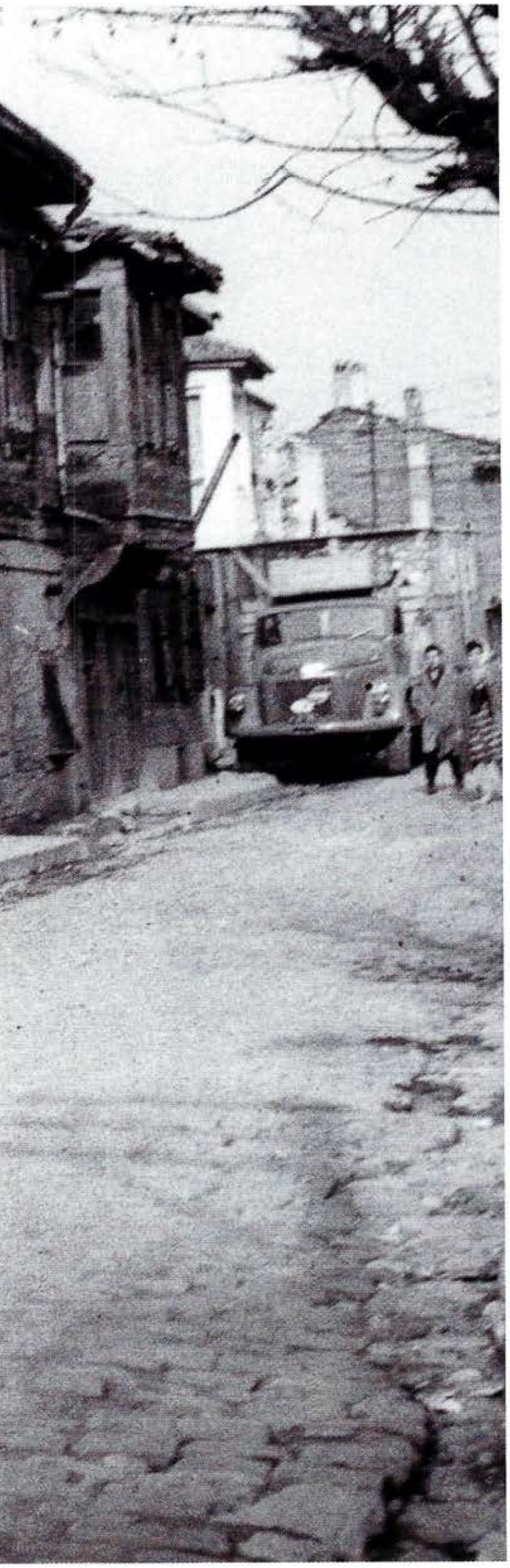
On many of our travels we used Freya Stark's books as guidebooks. We once met her, at a beach-side restaurant, I think near Alanya, and I remember her having a donkey to ride. I was surprised at this as, although I would have welcomed a donkey for our expeditions to many inaccessible sites, the coast road was well paved and full of cars. She also visited us in Istanbul and my parents and George stayed with her in Asolo, near Venice.

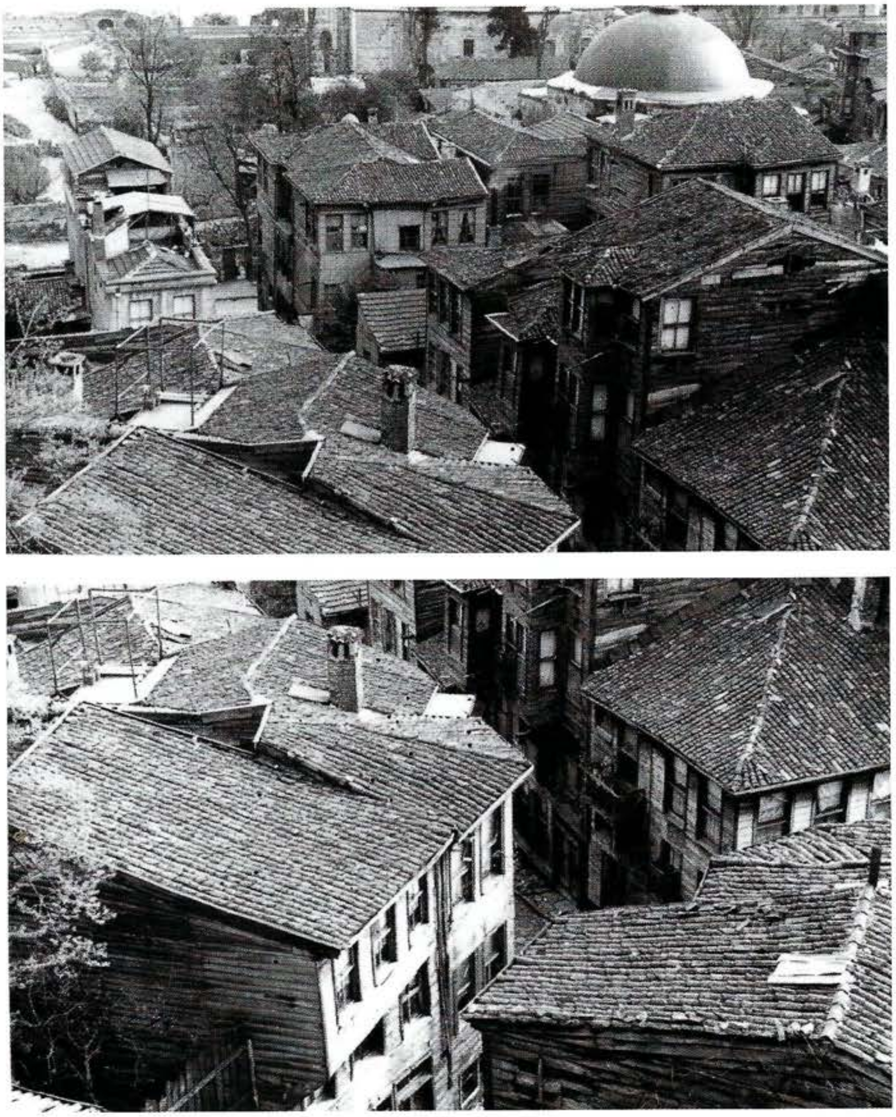
The film *Topkapi* was released in 1964. Its star, Peter Ustinov, was an old friend of my mother's, having gone to school with her younger brother. He and the rest of the cast, including Melina Mercouri and Robert Morley, came to dinner, and my brother George still remembers Peter Ustinov's hilarious stories and impersonations. I had heard they needed extras for the scene where the tourists leave the Topkapı Palace and I longed to be part of the excitement. That did not happen, but I do remember the *yalı* that was used in the film.

The Profumo affair was a sensational political scandal in England in 1963. Christine Keeler and Mandy Rice-Davies were at the centre of a sexual and political affair which severely damaged the government, and Mandy Rice-Davies came to Istanbul in 1964. I remember seeing a photograph of a woman wearing a bathing suit in the Turkish paper, which was very unusual in those days. When I asked about it my father commented drily that it was more than she usually wore. The Turkish authorities asked my father to tell her to leave the country and started deportation proceedings. She said that the Turks wanted her to leave because she sang Cole Porter's *Let's Do It, Let's Fall in Love*, but I suspect there may have been other reasons.

My father rang Mandy Rice-Davies. My mother and I listened in on the other line, and my mother reported

the conversation in a letter to my grandmother: "You could hear heaps of other people listening in (police etc, tapping and breathing) but Michael was unaware and sounded very firm and paternal. She said: 'What if I don't go?' 'I would if I were you,' said Michael. 'Turkish prisons are not like Holloway.' 'What if I'm ill?' 'I wouldn't be' said he." I vividly remember the question "What if I'm ill?" and I know that she had been in Holloway following her arrest in 1963. Some 20 years later I was working as a book conservator at the Pierpont Morgan Library in New York and teaching bookbinding at the Center for Book Arts in downtown Manhattan. Apart from offering classes, the center also took in bookbinding and printing jobs. One day I was teaching a class and noticed a blonde woman with an English accent talking to my colleagues. When she left they told me about her request. She had said she'd been "wronged" and had written a book to tell her side of the story. She had commissioned a black portfolio for the book proposal with "Revenge!" stamped on it in gold. The signature on the order meant nothing to my colleagues. It was Mandy Rice-Davies.





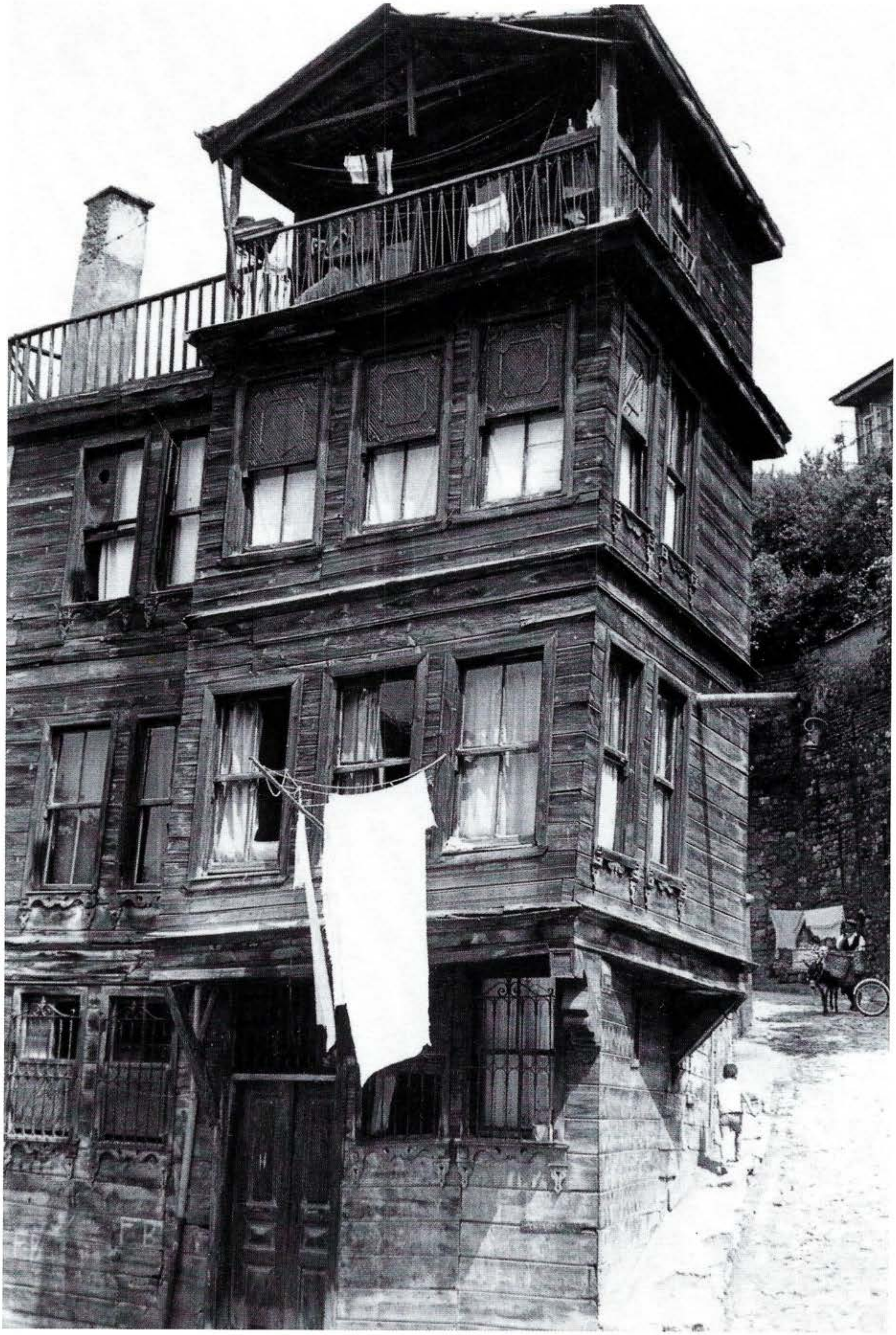
Left A street in the old city, near Silivri Kapı, one of the gates in the Byzantine land walls
Above Tiled roofs of the close-knit wooden houses in the Golden Horn district around the Selimiye Mosque

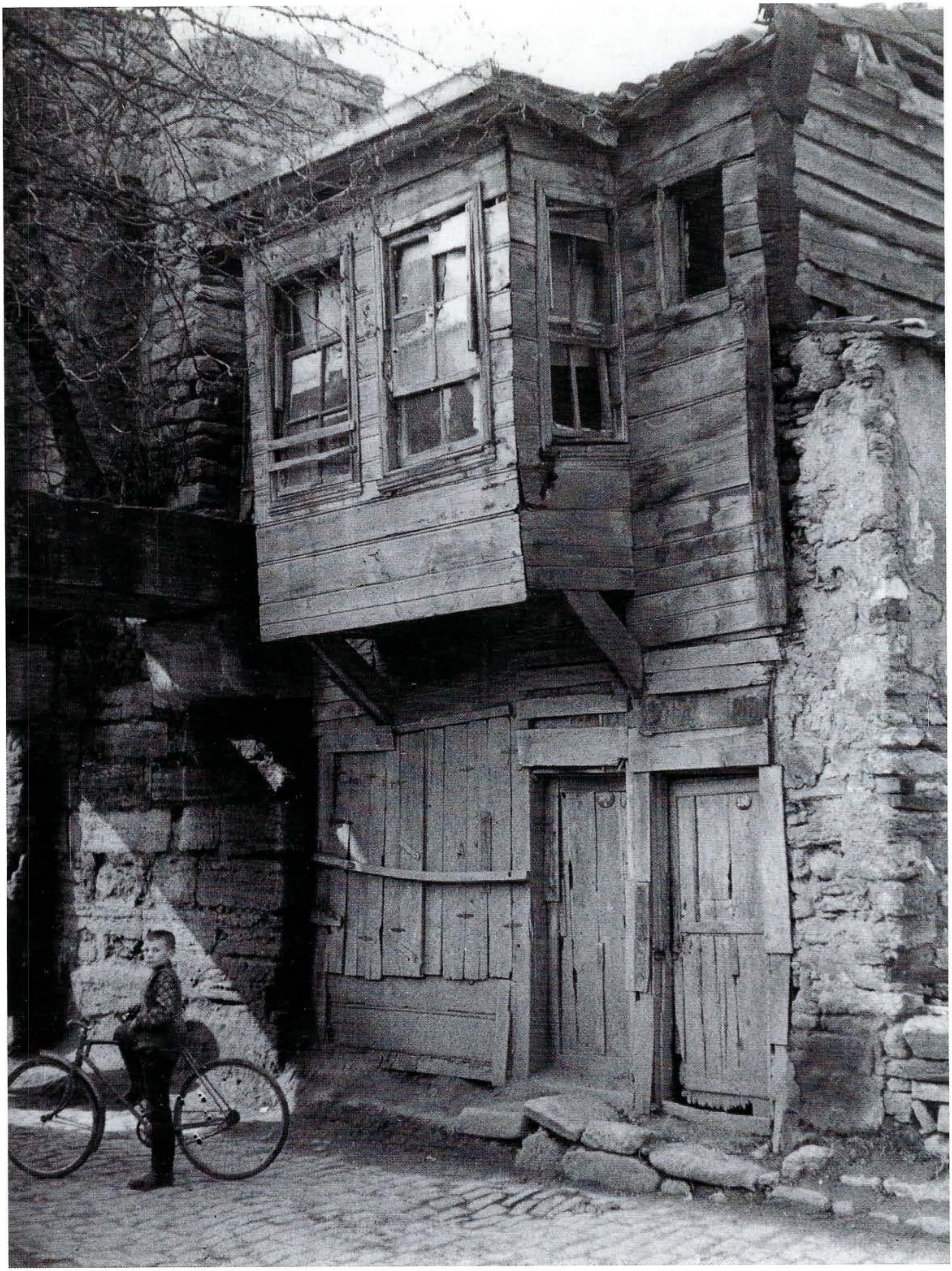
Following pages:
Left A wooden skyscraper in the district of the Sokullu Mehmet Pasha Mosque, below Sultanahmet
Right An old house leans against the city walls at Silivri Kapı. Gillian Warr was always teased for photographing nothing but little boys and wooden houses. She found plenty of both in Istanbul

Following a visit to Kaş, my parents decided they would like to buy some land on a small peninsula across the bay. They planned to build a house and retire there. But it was not easy for foreigners to buy land in those days and, after long negotiations, permission was refused. They still returned to Turkey as often as they could after my father retired, and maybe they would not have wanted to live in the newly developed modern Kaş.

A child's memory may be unreliable, but children do notice details and have the advantage of not being sidetracked by adult concerns. I have been able to check some facts with my brothers, my sister and friends, as well as my parents' letters. Others, from my memory alone, may be fictitious, but are still very real to me. Most of the photographs were taken with my mother's camera, some by George, who often used her camera when he would have been between the ages of 12 and 15. My mother mentions that Arlette Mellaart gave him photography tips. Other photographs are mine or my father's. ◆

Griselda Warr is a book conservator living in New York: *griseldamail@gmail.com*.
The photographs in this story are published courtesy of the Warr family. Also see Cornucopia 19 for Gillian Warr's photographs of Çatalhüyük in the 1960s





QUEEN OF THE WILD FRONTIER

She may be unconvinced by Noah's Ark, but Min Hogg finds plenty to feast on as she journeys across the vast borderlands where Turkey approaches Armenia and Iran. From Kars to Van, from Silk Road ruins to honeycombs and colossal breakfasts, she brings a wry, painterly eye to her lively account

Few would go to Kars for their holidays. But lying as it does close to the borders of Georgia, Armenia and Iran, and midway between the Black Sea and Lake Van, it is a perfect jumping-off point for adventures. The landscape is huge, flat and treeless. Older houses are either one-storey in stone with grassed roofs or Neoclassical painted stucco – reminders of a Tsarist past. Interestingly, in 1918 Kars declared itself a republic, but after only eight months the cabinet, based on a Russian model, was coerced into joining Turkey. In the outskirts small farms with compounds enclosed in dry-stone walls are teeming with cattle, geese and sheep. Heaps of compacted dung bricks resemble the vaulting horses in a school gymnasium. The haystacks are way larger than the houses, and everything is the colour of nature save for clothes on washing lines, which flutter in brilliant reds, pinks and greens. High on a rocky outcrop is Kars Castle, where a statue of Atatürk stands frozen in mid-stride.

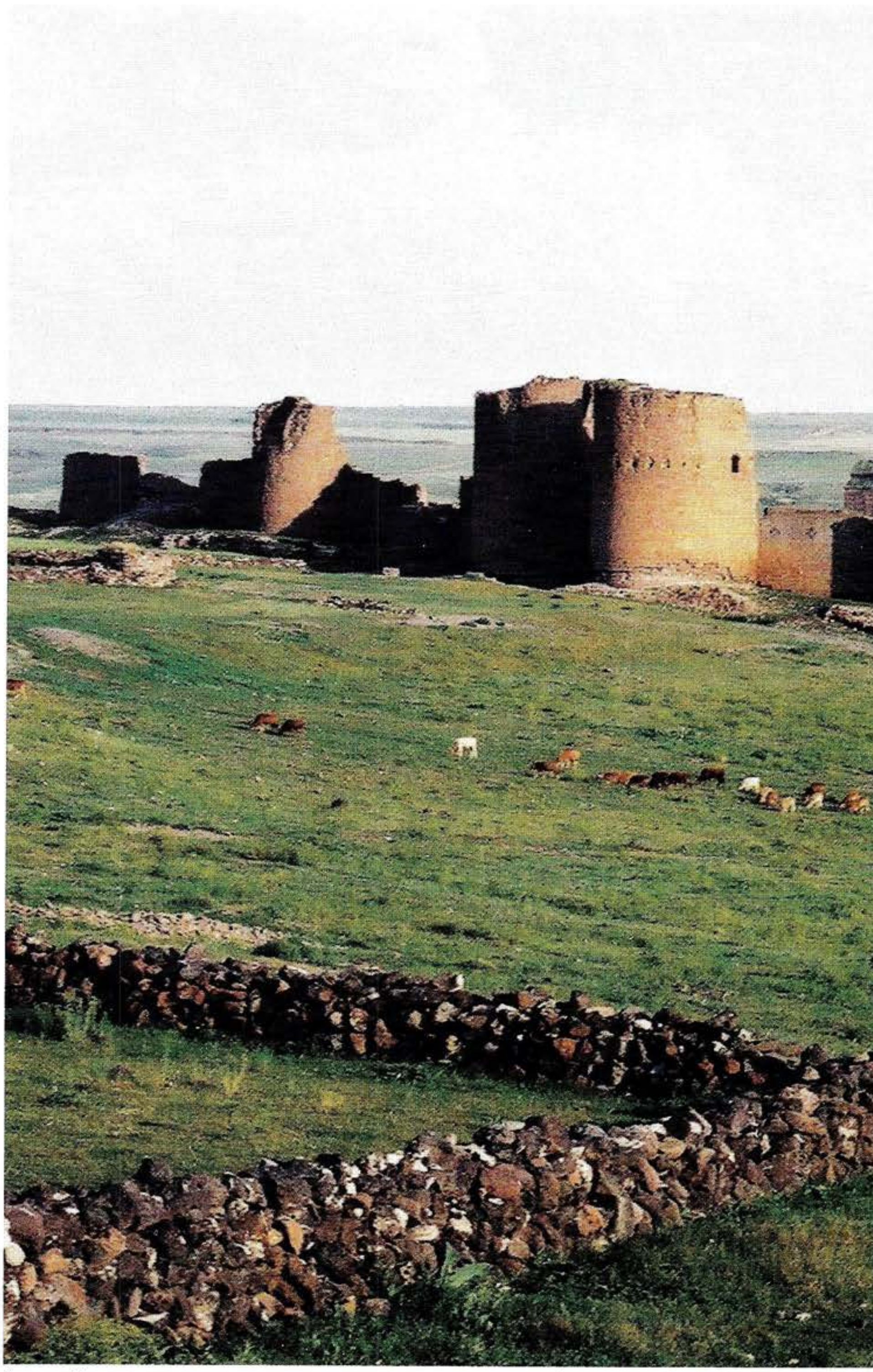
The Simer Hotel is a sober concrete affair of seven storeys, and the pillows on its beds in no way reflect the local abundance of goose down, but we are made very welcome. As a pre-dinner snack I order *cecil* – a Kars cheese that I am reliably told resembles string. Curious. We are brought a herby cream variety, not in the least stringy, which turns out to be *otlu peynir* from Van. After a couple of further attempts, the waiter understands my ever more energetic sign language and, wreathed in smiles, brings a skein of stringy white elastic. Sadly, it is less than a culinary highlight.

Kars Museum has the expected ancient pottery and lovely costumes. In its garden are stone sculptures in rounded shapes resembling the sheep drawn in the 1940s by Henry Moore, and as we inspect them a live flock scampers past – apparently their fatty tails make a soup almost fatal to an unaccustomed digestion. The horned rams look like miniature Highland cattle. The sheep attempt to board our parked bus but are beaten off by the herdsman.

The governor of Kars lives in a low yellow-stuccoed house. Guards with walkie-talkies usher us through to the mighty chandelier-lit drawing room, its five windows curtained in olive-green velvet and nets with pointed lace hems. Round the perimeter, for each guest, is an armchair, a coffee table, a plate of cakes and a glass of tea. The visiting Minister of Culture, seated on a throne of mock-croc leather, informs us in faultless English that, shamefully, the UK was not represented at his Istanbul conference on intangible world heritage – songs, dance, patterns and so on. The governor speaks in Turkish, brilliantly translated by a schoolmaster with a Groucho Marx moustache.

After a hefty 5am breakfast of casserole, we set off south for Ani. The stubble is coming up green again since last week's rain. Hills roll softly away, and distances are incalculable until you spot bell tents and herds of brown cows so far off they are mere specks. Thirty kilometres further on, there is a fault in the smoothness, and we are at Ani, on the River Arpaçay, which divides Turkey from Armenia.

In the 10th and 11th centuries, at its zenith, Ani was a city of at least 100,000, but by 1300 it had been abandoned. After assaults by Mongols, Muslims and Christians, all that remains within its crumbling city walls are a dozen or so reasonably complete ruins – churches, palaces, mosques and monasteries that stand 200 or 300 metres apart among the weeds, surrounded by empty hills. In the doorless and windowless churches the frescoes, though vandalised by iconoclasm, are still surprisingly brilliant. There is an ugly rumour that Armenian quarries just out of sight across the river explode dynamite to rock Ani's foundations, simply so that they can complain about Turkey failing in the upkeep of their heritage. The Convent of the Virgins is a little way off downstream on its own inaccessible crag.



ABOVE THE FORTIFIED WALLS OF THE 10TH-CENTURY CITY OF ANI ON THE RIVER ARPAÇAY, WHICH

There is a melancholy aura here; it feels like the end of the world. One cannot imagine the houses, baths, shops and streets bustling with Silk Road commerce, as they once did. I harvest the ripe seeds of promising-looking wild flowers.

Towards Doğubeyazıt there are mud-built settlements as old as time, and not a TV aerial in sight. Nor is there a single tree to punctuate the immensity of glacier-smoothed hills occasionally topped by rocky dragons' fins. Sometimes we catch sight of Armenia again, and nearing the Iranian border there are thrilling glimpses of Mount Ararat, its 5,165-metre peak covered with snow, but there are still

divides Turkey from the hills of Armenia. Opposite, below Sheep sculptures at Kars Museum. Below The governor's house at Kars

at least two mountain ranges in between.

Finally we reach a green and swampy plain where scattered herds of mules roam, and we can see Ararat and Baby Ararat soaring above them and beyond to Iran. Loaded trucks snake nose to tail towards the border customs posts; delays there are sometimes as long as three days.

We check into a more congenial branch of the Simer Hotel surrounded by gardens, and shortly leave in minibuses for the ascent of a hill facing Ararat, stopping at the village of Manser, where Noah's Ark came to rest.

Hasan commands the imposing-sounding Ark Centre, which in fact is a room empty except for a few old photographs and press cuttings. The story goes that in 1948 a glowing light was seen emanating from Hasan's field opposite. At first it was interpreted as the sign of a holy burial place, but the landslide that followed left a boat-shaped dip measuring 164 by 42 metres and fringed with jagged teeth-like rocks. All I can say is that it is definitely boat-shaped, and NASA has pronounced it visible from space, though how this lends authenticity to the myth I fail to grasp.

Some timbers, seashells and oddly coloured earth have been carbon-dated to 7000BC.

We picnic sprawling on cushioned carpets, near a lovably snoozing bull, and sample Mrs Noah's celebrated dessert, *aşure*, said to be concocted from the last things remaining in her larder as the Ark landed. In this particular instance it tastes as revolting as it sounds. But Hasan invites us to his house for what we agree is the best glass of tea ever – something to do with water purity, I imagine. Appealing children dash in and out, their snotty filth belied by a spotless house and endless washing on the line. Women hover wearing bright clothes and white headscarves. We are in a mud hamlet where cartwheels are still solid discs of wood, but the TV is proudly blaring. Mrs Hasan rushes in, remembering that she left open the doors of a very untidy cupboard; she hastily stuffs everything back in and retreats.

Next stop is the impressive Ishak Pasha Palace, in the back of beyond. In the 18th century, when it was built along Topkapı lines by a local dignitary, there can have been few people to impress. In room after empty room – 24 for the harem alone – there is nothing other than carved stone fireplaces and some low reliefs to indicate its previous decorative wonders. As the pink evening light fades, I realise, after a day of constant snapping, that there has been no film in my camera. One could kill oneself.

Jollity returns over cocktails taken in the hotel's lantern-lit black wool tent, followed by supper in the dining room, where even after three-quarters of the lights are switched off, the level of illumination is barely tolerable.

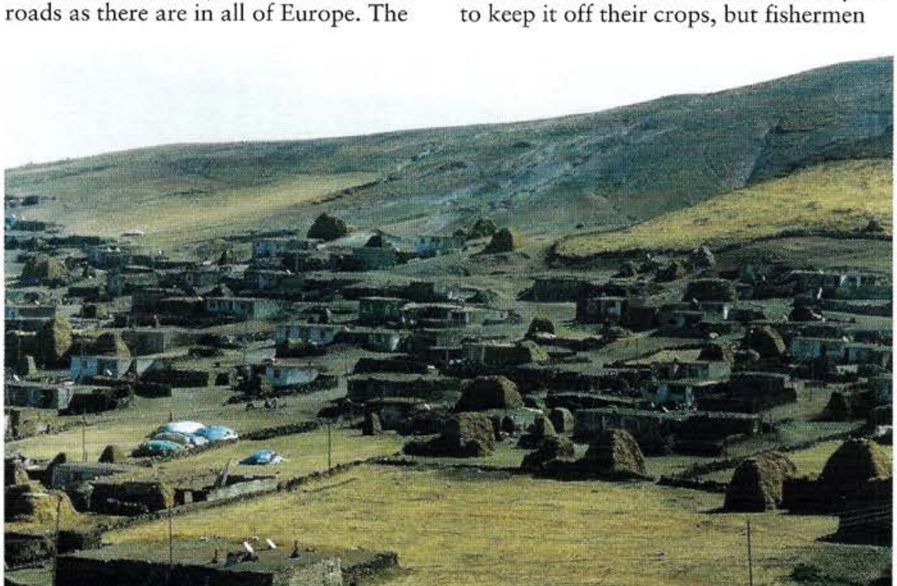
There are as many lorries on Turkish roads as there are in all of Europe. The explanation lies in failure to implement Atatürk's vision of a vast rail network. Ready-refined sugar, for example, could have been transported all over the land by goods trains, from factories built near both stations and beet fields. Instead, Atatürk's successors built roads, and our bus must cope as we travel on towards Lake Van.

We often see Turkey, Iran and Armenia simultaneously. The mighty, treeless mountains have outcrops of volcanic rock in the shapes and colours of broken toffee brittle, and striped poles line the road, indicating its path and the depth of snow in winter. We stop for tea at Muradiye, where hollyhocks bloom in ingeniously adapted lorry tyres. Access is over a wobbly suspension bridge spanning a waterfall – the less sure-footed manage to make it wobble all the more. Rumour has it there is a whorehouse here, too, with Russian girls available, though there is no sign of it among the whispering poplars.

Our bus trundles on through scenery so magnificent that we have no inclination to nod off, but the mountains end abruptly in a grassy valley gouged by a river that meanders occasionally over shallow rapids. Flocks of sheep huddle together, forming blobs of tightly packed wool, creating a little shade for the lucky few to lie down in while the sun blazes. Low hills slide very gently down into the sparkling blue waters of Lake Van, with its coastline of inlets, gritty beaches and promontories planted neatly with poplar trees.

Van's water is slightly fizzy with bicarbonate of soda. Farmers build dykes to keep it off their crops, but fishermen wash clothes by dragging them through the water behind their boats; it is also excellent for cleaning carpets, as well as human hair and skin.

ABOVE MOUNT ARARAT'S SNOWY PEAK SOARS ABOVE



We swerve off at Ahlat to lunch in a deserted lakeside hotel. It is a beautiful day and there is a canopied terrace with tables and chairs, but we lunch indoors, grudgingly, if well, and follow it with a quick paddle in the lake's silky waters.

Nearby is the 200-acre Seljukid cemetery, where cadavers from the 11th century are buried with one shoulder facing Mecca. Their two-metre-tall headstones, which point north-south, are

ncient farming settlements. Left A village of houses and haystacks. Below Jagged rocks outline the shape of Noah's Ark at Manser

carved with the occupant's name amid rampant vegetal tracery very reminiscent of Celtic art. There are legions of them marching through the dried golden grass.

We check into the Hotel Merit Şahmeran, where one intrepid couple swim in the lake before supper. Their whoops of delight turn to cries of woe as they negotiate slippery boulders on getting out. A zillion green insects have stormed through gaps in my bedroom window netting and formed their own cemetery on the pillow; they don't seem to be the stinging kind, and no more arrive.

Guarding the roundabout at the

entrance to Van City is a gigantic model of the unique white Van cat, with its one blue and one green eye – Jeff Koons would eat his heart out to have made it. And in our hotel there is a live Van kitten, Pamuk, with whom we soon fall deeply in love.

Among his tribal rugs, the curator at Van Museum is desperately trying to stabilise the folding legs of a tray table; each time he puts the tray back on top, it collapses. Most of the exhibits here are from the Urartu civilisation of 700BC – and very civilised they were too, with their hairpins, tweezers, gold jewellery and obsidian razor blades.

We repair to the market, where old buffers beside a cart are haggling over the merits of various tobaccos, loose in black bin bags. Our pleasure at the sight of Van cheese heaped into washing-up bowls, glittering textiles and oozing honeycombs is decidedly enhanced by the adjacent butcher's display of skinned sheeps' heads.

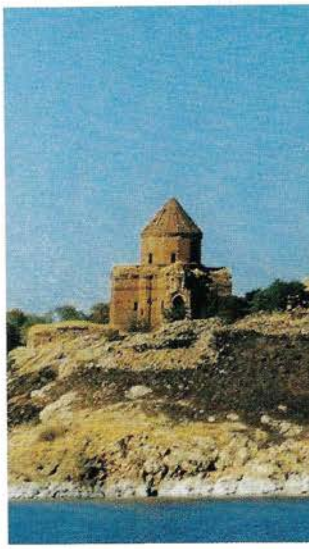
Akdamar Island, where we were to have picnicked, is infested with flies today, and lunch is switched to a delightful restaurant on the mainland. Awnings dapple the sun, fritillary butterflies dart about, and the tablecloths are wrapping-paper printed with mauve lockets and red hearts. We are told the lake fish grilling over charcoal are mullet. They look nothing like grey mullet, more like sardines. They turn out to be pearl mullet, which are unique to Lake Van and very tasty.

TOP THE PLAIN OF VAN SEEN FROM THE 8TH-CENTURY ÇAVUŞTEPE CASTLE. THE FERTILE LAND IS STILL FED BY THE 65KM CANAL BUILT BY THE GREAT URARTU KING MENUA, WHO ALSO CONSTRUCTED HANGING GARDENS FOR HIS DAUGHTER. ABOVE A STELE FROM HAKKÂRI, C1400BC, NOW IN VAN MUSEUM

After lunch we pile into a chug-chug boat. There isn't a ripple on the lake as we finally approach little Akdamar Island, with its church nestling among almond trees. Founded in the ninth century by an architect-monk for the Armenian king Ardzouri, its cruciform exterior is boisterously carved with images from the Old and New Testaments: George and the Dragon, Adam and Eve, Jonah and the whale, Daniel and a lion. Inside, the dome is frescoed.

Warnings about flies here are not exaggerated. They are especially attracted to dark clothes. We are covered in the bastards, and flailing about is a waste of energy – there are just too many of them.

Next stop is the remains of eighth-century Urartu-period Çavuştepe Castle, set on the spine of a narrow hilltop overlooking a fertile plain below, where a collage of greens, browns and ochres is punctuated by a lone figure in scarlet, tilling. The guide, who has been here for 30 years, can read chiselled cuneiform inscriptions as though they were the newspaper. From our high vantage point

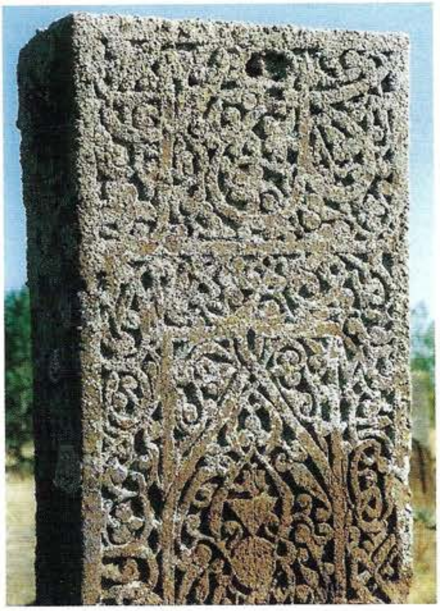


he points out cisterns, lavatories, altars and temples. The Shamran Canal is a miracle of engineering: 65 kilometres long, it was bringing fresh water to irrigate apple orchards near Van in the reign of the Urartian king Menua in 810 BC.

Dinner is at an old restored house at the foot of the cliff on which Van Castle stands. It is run by a female co-operative and hired out for entertaining. The rooms have divans all round, covered in crisp white cotton embroidered in pink or green. We loll on them and eat barley soup, meatballs and vizier's fingers while drinking the wine we sort of smuggled into this officially dry venue.

Those who go up to explore the castle after dinner armed with one faltering torch come back breathless with fear at its sheer drops and dungeons, but also in awe of the normally most nervy member of the group, able to swoon at the sight of a wasp, who tonight was transformed into a chamois, leaping with ease from rock to rock in the pitch-black. Nearing midnight, some important politicians turn up in black limos and cheekily attempt to annex our guide, but the tour leader will have none of it.

The finale to the trip is a gargantuan alfresco breakfast in the country. Up a bumpy track we halt at a nondescript farmhouse engulfed in a glorious tangle of vegetables, fruit, flowers and haystacks. Under the rickety vine-covered pergola is a table scarcely visible beneath dozens of breakfast dishes.



TOP LEFT AND ABOVE INTRICATELY CARVED 11TH-CENTURY SELJUKID GRAVES AT AHLAT
TOP RIGHT BAKING BREAD IN A TERRACOTTA OVEN SUNK INTO THE GROUND
CENTRE ROW FROM LEFT A ROOFTOP HAYSTACK ON A HOUSE IN VAN; HAGGLING OVER TOBACCO IN VAN MARKET; THE CHURCH ON THE ISLAND OF AKDAMAR

There is honey with clotted cream, cracked wheat and chickpea mush topped with melted butter, eggs poached in a delicious stew of onions and tomatoes, fragrant with *reyhan* (a wild basil), salads, fruit and much more. Three varieties of hot bread arrive in a continuous flow from next door, where it is baked by a neighbour sitting cross-legged beside a jar-shaped terracotta oven sunk into the ground and containing a few glowing coals. She flattens little balls of dough with a rolling pin, then, twirling them round and round in the air, she stretches them enough to fit over a hard cushion for damping, before slapping them onto the interior wall of the oven to cook. Tea flows from a samovar, also charcoal-powered. Our childish greed knows no limits, and it is my birthday, too. ◆

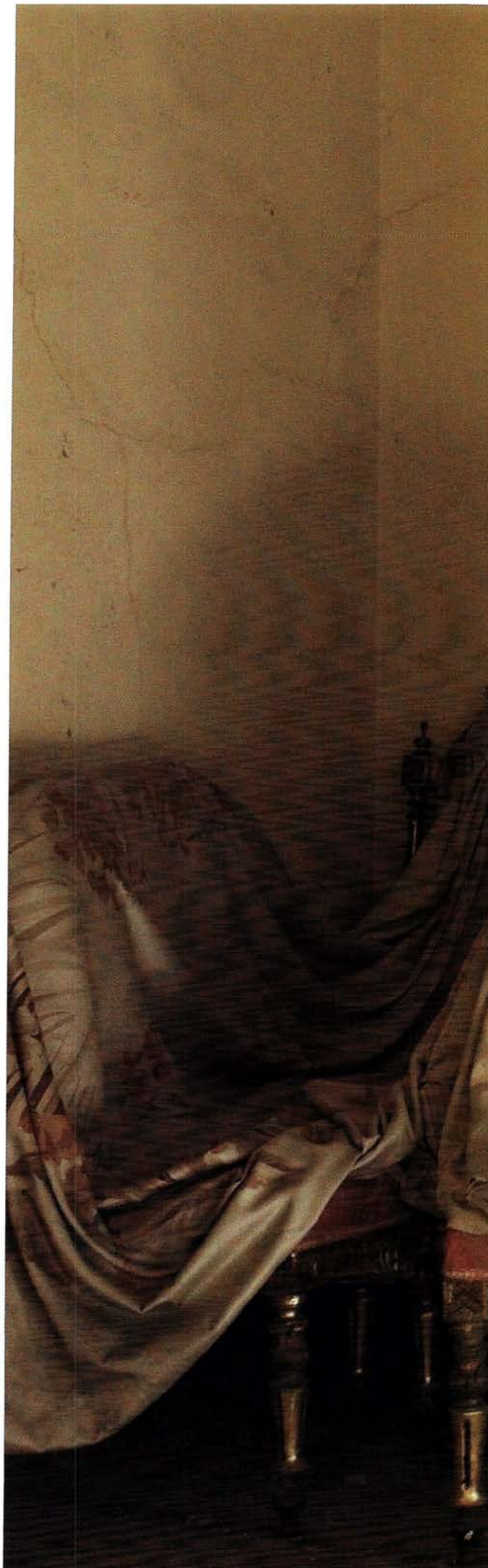
MIN HOGG *is founding editor of* THE WORLD OF INTERIORS *and has launched a new collection of wallpapers and fabrics; for details, www.minhoggdesign.com. She travelled with Turkish Airlines (thy.com) and The Ultimate Travel Company, London (theultimatetravelcompany.co.uk)*

PORTFOLIO

SILENT WITNESS

THESE EMPTY HOMES ON ISTANBUL'S ASIAN SHORE WERE ONCE FULL OF LIFE, HOPES AND DREAMS. MAUREEN FREELY STUDIES THE HAUNTING PHOTOGRAPHS OF METEHAN ÖZCAN

There are no people in Metehan Özcan's photographs. There are only spirits. They inhabit spaces that have outlived their usefulness, but they refuse to let go. For those of us who knew Istanbul in the 1960s and 1970s, every detail is heart-rending. Here are the door handles without which no modern dwelling was complete. Here are the diamond floor tiles, the iron bed frames, the striped brown curtains and the panes of frosted glass. Though the wives and servants who once kept these rooms gleaming are nowhere to be seen, we share their shock and dismay as we survey the gaping windows and the gashes in the walls, the dust and the mould, the cracked concrete and the seedlings growing out of the mounds of dirt. But then, very slowly, we notice how the light plays on the pockmarked walls of the ruined bedroom, blurring the pillow against the bed's hard lines and curves. We see a hint of Visconti in the artful curves of the curtain thrown so carelessly over the huddled but still golden Louis XV chairs. We forget the wall that



A ROOM ONCE FIT FOR A KING IN ERENKÖY (2007)

ABOVE A LINE OF LEAFLESS TREES, TAKEN, LIKE SO MANY OF ÖZCAN'S PHOTOGRAPHS, IN THE OUTLYING NEIGHBOURHOODS OF ISTANBUL'S ASIAN SHORE, IN THIS CASE BOSTANCI (2008)
OPPOSITE INNER WORLD: YESTERDAY'S TILES, DOORS AND FROSTED GLASS IN A KÜÇÜKYALI ENTRANCE (2006)

once was home to this flaking, cracking paint and instead we see an abstract marriage of colour and texture. We look out into the night to contemplate a row of leafless trees recoiling behind a constellation of street lamps whose misty funnels of light cannot penetrate the blackness of the earth below. We admire the odd tilt of the chandelier that would once have announced the wealth of its westward-looking owners, and we recall the many evenings we spent in rooms just like this, assuming like everyone around us that these walls were here to stay.

Metehan Özcan was born in 1975, at the height of Turkey's love affair with modernity. An old house was an embarrassment, best replaced with an apartment building. Concrete was good. A good home would have fine carpets and gleaming parquet floors and sitting rooms fit for a French king, but in the homes of the *nouveaux riches* there was also a lot of chipboard and Naugahyde and harsh overhead lighting. Such things were emblematic of a modern, European outlook. But by the mid-1990s, when Metehan set out to study first architecture and then visual and interior design, a different sensibility had come into play. There was a renewed interest in antiques and antiquities, old houses and traditional artefacts. The modernist dreams of the mid-20th century had begun to tarnish.

By now Metehan was working as an architectural photographer. His father, formerly a traffic policeman, and his mother, formerly a nurse, had set up as estate agents on the Asian side of Istanbul. They got into the habit of sending Metehan to photograph vacated properties before putting them on the market. But as he was soon to discover, their

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Paint flaking from a wall in Küçükyali (2006)

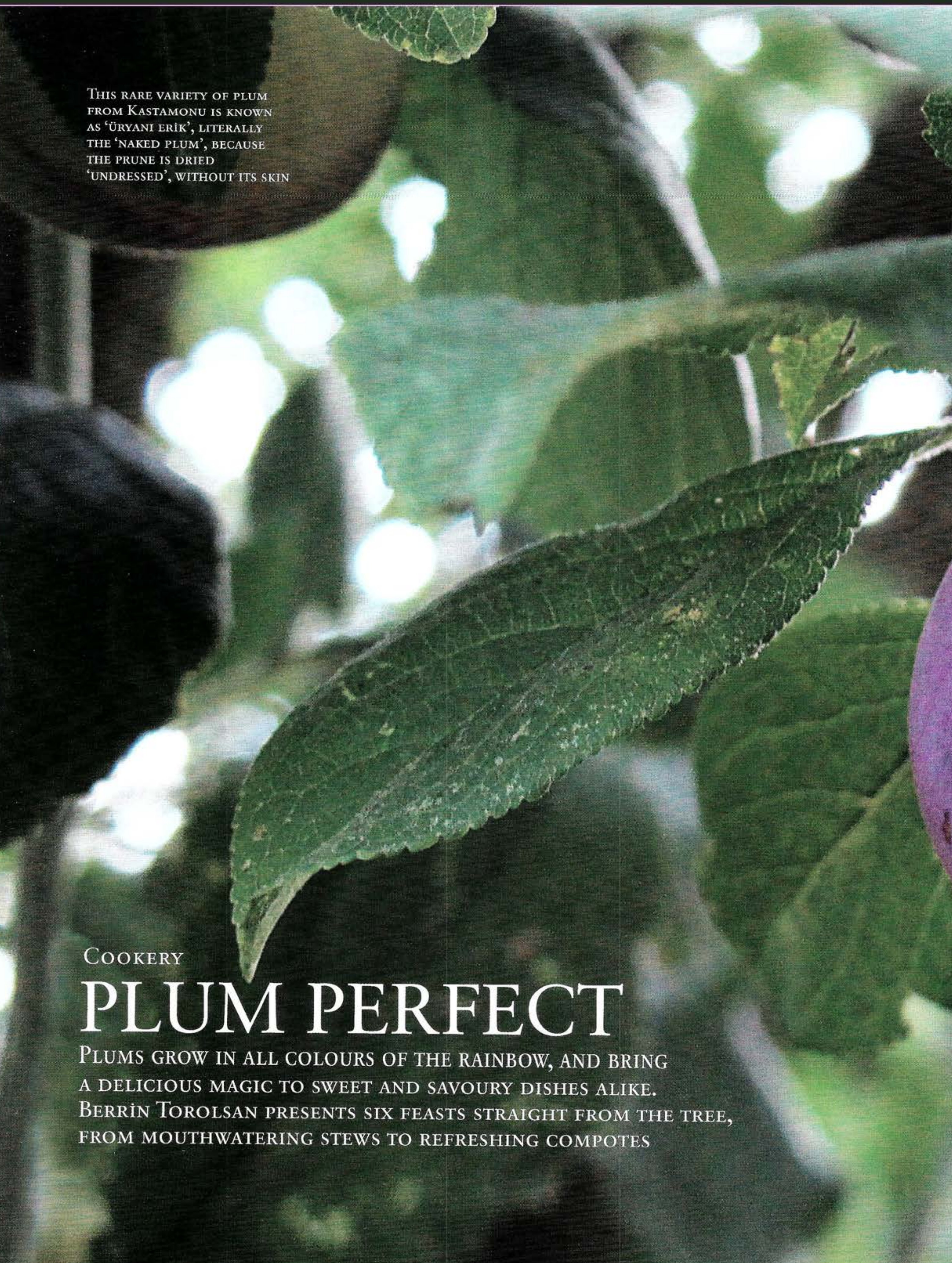
former owners had left their traces everywhere. He felt their presence so keenly he was reluctant even to shift a chair. He found solace in the silence he found in these abandoned spaces. Especially after dark, their crumbling walls suggested a city more truthful and accepting than the one he was forced to inhabit by day. During his long nightly walks along the Asian shore, he would sometimes convince himself that he had entered a ghost world that only he could see.

As it turned out, he was right. Viewed conventionally, these spaces would speak only of loss. They would prompt facile repudiations of an age when an entire nation seemed eager to embrace modernity without question. But when Metehan Özcan turns his camera on these desecrated homes, he sees human defences weakening. He shows man-made spaces finally relenting to accept the natural world in all its force and beauty.

In much the same spirit, he welcomes in the viewer. As in the work of Zafer and Barbara Baran, whom he cites as his artistic mentors, his images undo any attempt at detachment. As our eyes wander into these darkened spaces, our minds conjure up the people who once lived here, dusting and polishing their dreams. Slowly their voices penetrate the silence. Soft and comforting, they waft through the walls that pain builds around the past, reminding us that even here, amidst the chipped paint, there is beauty. ◆

The photographs in this article are from Metehan Özcan's *exhibition 'Vacuum', shown at the Operation Room gallery, the American Hospital, Istanbul, in July 2010. For more information about his work, see www.metehanozcan.com.* Maureen Freely *is the author of six novels, of which the most recent is 'Enlightenment'. A professor at Warwick University, she is perhaps best known for her translations of five of Orhan Pamuk's novels, including 'The Museum of Innocence' (2008). Maureen.Freely@warwick.ac.uk*

Ruined bedroom on the island of Heybelİada (2001)



This rare variety of plum from Kastamonu is known as 'Üryani Erik', literally the 'naked plum', because the prune is dried 'undressed', without its skin

Cookery

PLUM PERFECT

Plums grow in all colours of the rainbow, and bring a delicious magic to sweet and savoury dishes alike. Berrin Torolsan presents six feasts straight from the tree, from mouthwatering stews to refreshing compotes

When I think of you
A plum tree decorates itself from head to toe
And begins to whirl like mad
And by whirling it undoes itself in clusters
By unravelling, it dissolves, diminishes
Turning in my mouth into a plum of deepest blue
Of which the kernel is still milky
Touching it my lips burn

A symbol of sudden joy and loveliness, the plum tree has been an inspiration to countless artists, as it is here, in the poem *Çakıl*, or *Pebble*, to Bedri Rahmi Eyüboğlu, who was both a painter and a poet. At the end of winter, when chill, grey days drag on, it is so heart-warming to spy a plum tree in the middle of a field or against dark, bare branches at the edge of a wood, decorated from top to bottom in white blossom like snowflakes. For Brecht, in his poem *Der Pflaumenbaum*, the plum tree represents loneliness and vulnerability. More usually, however, it stands for rebirth: the flowering plum is a recurring motif in miniatures, where it is often paired with a slender cypress, its counterpart, death.

Possibly one of the oldest cultivated fruit trees is *Prunus domestica*, a small deciduous tree bearing clusters of white flowers and sweet fruit that shade from green and yellow to red, violet, dark blue and purple. Self-seeding and resilient, it comes in infinite varieties and thrives in any temperate climate.

Turkey has hordes of hybrids and cultivars growing all over the country, along roadsides, on hillsides, up mountains, in fields and gardens. In his monumental 11-volume *Flora of Turkey* (1972), the Edinburgh botanist Peter Davis suggests that damson (*erik* or *kara erik* in Turkish) and greengage (*İtalyan eriği*), long cultivated in Europe, may even be native to Turkey. "The common plum, *P. domestica*," he explains, "is a hybrid between *P. spinosa* and *P. divaricata*... it is truly impossible to identify between wild and naturalised populations in Turkey." Also growing wild is the bullace tree – *çakal eriği* in Turkish, literally jackal plum – which has clusters of tiny fruit that ripen towards the end of summer into sharp-flavoured red or yellow plums the size of marbles.

Besides the commercial cultivars grown all over the world, there are a few cultivated plums that are peculiar to Turkey. One is the early-fruiting light-green plum known as *can eriği* (life plum). Classified in fruit catalogues as *Prunus cerasifera*, it appears on market stalls in April like a messenger of spring. It is popular with children, who raid orchards for the fruits while they are still the size of a cherry, too impatient to wait for them to ripen. Later, picked at the right time, they taste less sharp but keep their firm, crisp texture and fine skin.

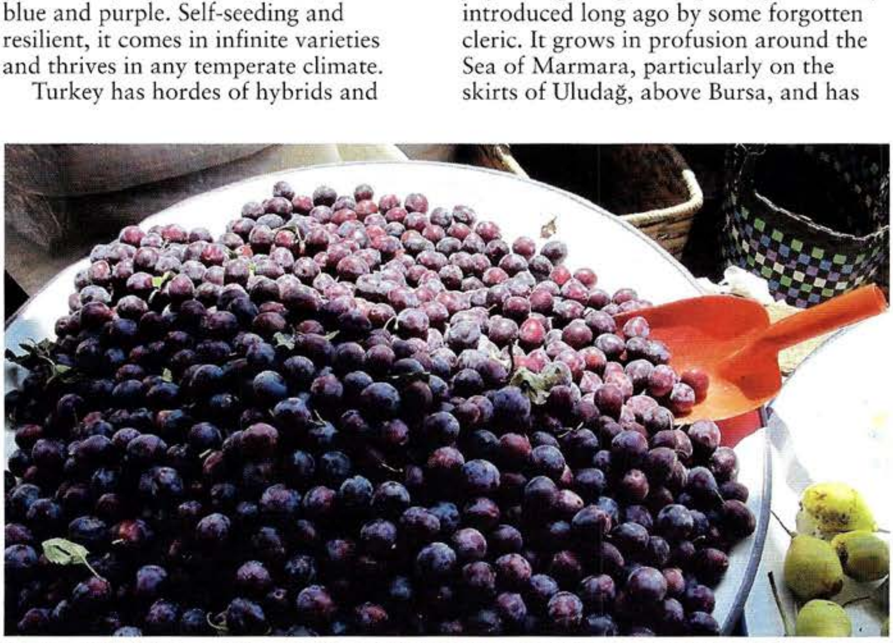
Another green plum then follows, the *papaz eriği*, or priest's plum, presumably introduced long ago by some forgotten cleric. It grows in profusion around the Sea of Marmara, particularly on the skirts of Uludağ, above Bursa, and has attractive shiny, deep-emerald fruit and equally dark leaves. Again, the fruit are firm, crisp and extremely juicy, with a fresh aroma. These early green varieties all have round clingstone fruit, and they vanish quite suddenly at the end of June.

July brings a whole new cast of plums, blushing yellow or deep red in colour. Clingstone or freestone, they come in all shapes and sizes. Many are brought to market from trees growing here and there in vegetable gardens or orchards. They have little commercial value but are tasty and make lovely cakes. They are also good for marmalades and compotes and freeze perfectly.

In August the aristocratic *mürdüm* takes the stage, its deep-purple skin made frosty by a protective substance called wax bloom. *Mürdüms* often grow in pairs on a single stalk and so are also known in Turkish as *ikiz* (twin plums). They have a groove down one side, longish, pointed freestones to which the flesh does not adhere at all (which makes them easy to stone) and a sweet golden flesh. While large ripe fruits are reserved for the table, smaller ones make excellent preserves. The large, dark-blue, egg-shaped *bardak eriği*, resembling the blue "Reine Claude violette" plum, is only to be found in the gardens of old private houses these days. A succulent, fragrant plum, it is a feast straight from the tree.

My childhood brings back memories of summers spent up a greengage tree in our garden on the Bosphorus. Its leafy branches were my refuge for most of the day. The dusky blue-green plums were delicious but tart to begin with, and by the end of summer they turned into translucent amber delights. Alas, the tree is no longer there, but the taste and texture of the fruit are still alive in my memory. Born in a plum-growing country, I remember countless delicious, interesting plums in different gardens and orchards in every corner of Turkey, but that greengage remains special. The gumdrops that developed on the trunk interested me, too; I used to collect them without knowing what to do with them. It turns out that plum-tree gum, softened in vinegar, is a folk remedy for rashes.

Today we know that plums are rich in vitamins B and C, as well as antioxidants called phenols that prevent damage to fats and purify the blood. Prunes, or dried plums, long appreciated for their laxative qualities, are now, thanks to recent research, enjoying a reputation as


SMALL AND TASTY: PLUMS IN A MARKET WHERE VILLAGERS GATHER TO SELL THEIR PRODUCE

DELICIOUS DIMPLES: WITH THE MINUMUM OF FUSS EVEN THE MOST UNPROMISING PLUMS MAKE A LOVELY CAKE

powerhouses of health-giving properties.

Plums' beneficial qualities were known to the physicians of the past, too. In his manual to good health, *Müntahab-ı Şifa,* written in the late 14th or early 15th century, Celâlüddin Hızır refers repeatedly to two plums: the *kara erük* and the *tag erügi*, the black plum and the mountain plum. He recommends their cool and humid qualities for ailments resulting from an excess of warmth. One remedy prescribes "*yigirmi demeskine erügi*", "20 plums of Damascus", which suggests the early origins of the fruit in the Levant. A host of later names – *damaskin, dwaskin, zwaskin*, possibly the German *Zwetschge*, certainly the English "damascene" plum and the modern "damson" – derive from the place name Damascus.

All the species and subspecies of *Prunus* are known in Turkish as *erik*, from the Central Asian word *erük*, which, like *Prunus*, is used for many members of the *Rosacea* family and indeed for fruit in general. Mahmut al Kashgari's 11th-century lexicon of Turkic languages lists *erüklenmek* (to fruit), *erüksemek* (to crave fruit) and *erüklük* (fruit garden).

Another lexicographer, Ahmet Vefik Pasha, ambassador to Paris and grand vizier to Abdülhamid II, lists the best-known varieties of plum in his 1876 dictionary of Ottoman dialects, *Lehçe-i Osmani*. Some, such as *frenk erik*, Frankish plums, *acem erik*, and Persian plums, *vişne erik*, sour-cherry plums, are forgotten today. But the pasha mentions one kind I have always been curious about: *üryani erik*, the "naked" plum. Why "naked"?

I know the naked plum still exists because every winter my family have traditionally bought packets of it, dried into the most sought-after of prunes. But it is a rarity, so I set off to see it for myself growing on the tree. In this country of plums, every village in every corner of Anatolia claims its own unique variety. But only Kastamonu, in the hinterland of the Black Sea, boasts the naked plum. In Daday, a valley just outside the town, a handful of villages have been encouraged to keep cultivating this plump, purplish-blue variety. The fruit is picked in the last week of August or early September, depending on the year. This year the harvest was late, but already in early August the branches were laden with fruit turning from pinkish yellow to blue. This plum is delicious fresh, but it is chiefly in its dried form that it becomes a delicacy.

When it is ripe and oozing with fragrance and sweetness, the delicate skin peels off easily to expose the amber-coloured flesh. Many hands in Kastamonu are kept busy skinning plums one by one before sun-drying them on special hornbeam trays. The stone, a semi-clingstone, is left in to preserve the shape. Sabiha Hanım is a farmer with a grand country house in the area who also grows *üryani*. Of course, she told us, there are more sophisticated ways to skin and dry plums. But this way they retain an intense flavour – and their rarity value.

Each year some five to ten tons of plums from the valley are neatly packed in boxes and dispatched to the better shops of Istanbul, where they are sold as *üryani erik*, the "naked plums" of Ahmet Vefik Pasha's list. Still keenly sought after by connoisseurs, they make the most delicious compote, or *hoşaf*.

Recalling the old ways of life in Istanbul, the novelist Semiha Ayverdi writes in *Ibrahim Efendi'nin Konağı* (*The Konak of Ibrahim Efendi*): "Entering the larder, one would always see on the shelves apricots from Damascus, Malatya and Tokat, honey from Ankara, *üryani* [prunes] from Kastamonu and dates from Baghdad and Hijaz..."

The emperor Babur, founder of the Mughal empire, kept a diary from the age of 16 until his death in 1529. In the *Baburnama* (*Memoirs of Babur*), written in Chagatay Turkish, the language of the Mughal court, he gives vivid accounts of events, people, geography, botany and agriculture in 16th-century Transoxiana and India. Describing the perfection of the orchards and gardens of Bukhara and the excellence of their fruit, he, too, notes that the area's urivalled plums, skinned and dried, are a precious commodity sent from country to country.

A hundred years earlier the great traveller Ibn Batuta had also encountered a special prune plum in Vabkent, not far from Bukhara, "which they dry and export to India and China... One can soak it in water and drink the liquid. The fruit itself is sweet when fresh and green and slightly acid when dried. It is quite a fleshy fruit! I have not seen anything similar either in Andalusia or Magrip [Morocco] or Damascus".

Most dark-blue and purple plums are suitable for drying. Freestone varieties are halved and their stones removed. Others are dried whole. Added to stews, they give a delectable sweet-and-sour edge.

Other means have been devised to preserve the goodness of a bumper plum harvest. One is to cook them into a purée, which is spread thinly on trays and left out to dry in the sun. The result is fine sheets of *pestil*, or fruit "leather", which are folded or rolled into cylinders to be stored. Delightful sherbets can be made by breaking off and soaking pieces of this *pestil*. Children enjoy the chewy texture just as it is.

THE GOODNESS OF GREENS: STUFFED VINE LEAVES WITH PLUMS IN THE MAKING

Another Anatolian speciality is *sucuk*, more commonly a spicy sausage, but also a sweetmeat made with the molasses of fresh plums or grapes. It is prepared by simmering the juice in large cauldrons until it thickens to the consistency of honey and thickening it further with a little rice flour or cornstarch. Walnuts threaded on a string like a row of beads are dipped in the thick syrup, then hung to dry in an airy larder, looking rather like candles, to be relished later.

Just as artists and poets continue to find inspiration in the fragile beauty of the plum tree in blossom, and the wood remains a favourite of woodwind instrument makers, so our senses continue to be beguiled by the jewel colours and sweet, succulent tang of this most gorgeous of fruits.

☐ Wondering about the classification of the *üryani* plum, I decided to call the doyenne of Turkish botanists, Prof Asuman Baytop of Istanbul University. After consulting Dr Jerzy Zielinski of Poznan University, the great woody-plant expert, she wrote back to say that the exotic *üryani* is in fact a variety of the simple *Prunus domestica*.

☐ To order *üryani* prunes directly from Kastamonu, email afacan037@gmail.com or visit www.toprakana.com.tr

ERİKLİ YAHNİ
LAMB STEW WITH PRUNES

500g lamb (cubed)
200g prunes (any kind)
1 tablespoon butter
25 pearl onions (peeled and left whole)
1 or 2 cloves garlic (whole)
Fresh tomatoes (chopped roughly) or 1 tablespoon tomato paste (diluted with a little water)
Juice and zest of 1/2 lemon
1 bay leaf
Salt and sugar to taste
1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1 stick of cinnamon

This dish from imperial Bursa, which could also be made with mutton or kid, is a delicious combination of sweet and sour flavours. Fahrihe Hanım, author of the 1882 cookery book *Evkadını* (*Housewife*), recommends using fatty pieces of meat and making this stew with chestnuts, dried apricots or black prunes.

1 Rinse the meat and leave to drain in a colander.

2 In a deep bowl, pour boiling water over the prunes to cover and leave to soak for 2–3 hours.

3 Melt the butter in a heavy pan, stir-fry the onions until golden all over, and transfer with a slotted spoon to a plate for use later.

4 Place the meat and garlic cloves in the hot butter, if necessary adding a little more butter. Fry on a high heat, stirring, until the meat has browned on all sides and re-absorbed the juices it releases. Add the tomatoes or paste. Pour in half a glass of water, cover and bring to the boil.
5 Squeeze and zest the lemon and add the juice and zest to the pan along with the bay leaf. Reduce the heat and cook for about 20 minutes, covered, checking from time to time that it has not stuck to the bottom of the pan.
6 When the meat is tender, add the onions and drained prunes, and season with salt, sugar, pepper and cinnamon. Add a little extra hot water if the cooking liquids have reduced too much and continue simmering for another 10–20 minutes until the onions are soft when pierced with the point of a knife and the prunes have swollen.
7 Serve hot, with the sauce spooned over. A steaming white rice pilav would accompany this dish perfectly.

ERİKLİ YAPRAK DOLMASI
STUFFED VINE LEAVES WITH PLUMS

250g vine leaves
Filling:
250g minced meat (lamb or veal)
1 medium onion (finely chopped)
1 tablespoon short-grain rice (rinsed)
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
Fresh or dried mint
A handful each of fresh dill and fresh parsley (both chopped)
1/2 tablespoon tomato paste
A handful of green plums
Yoghurt to serve

Hans Dernschwam, who lived in Istanbul between 1553 and 1555, wrote up his experiences in Turkey in great detail when he returned home. He observed that stuffed vine leaves were cooked with plums. This would have been in May, when vine leaves are tender and green plums ripe. After June 15, vine leaves start to become fibrous, so they are always picked beforehand and preserved in brine (*salamura*). Nowadays it is simpler to divide them into small batches and freeze them.
1 Blanch the vine leaves in boiling water until they are olive-green and limp enough to work with. If you are using preserved leaves, remove all the salt by pouring boiling water over them and leaving to soak for 15–20 minutes. Either way, now rinse the leaves under cold running water and set aside to drain while preparing the filling.
2 Place the minced meat, onion, rice, salt, pepper and herbs in a bowl. Add about half a glass of water to obtain a moist texture and blend all the ingredients well with a spoon.
3 Make yourself comfortable at a table. Spread each vine leaf on a flat plate (downy side up so that the tiny salt crystals and minerals in the leaf infuse the filling with their grapey flavour). Place a spoonful of the filling at the base of the leaf, snip off the stem, and fold the sides of the leaf over the filling. Then roll the leaf into a small cylindrical bundle to enclose the filling completely. Arrange the dolmas neatly in layers in a shallow pan, until you have used up either the filling or the leaves. The leftovers freeze well.
4 Tuck the plums in between the dolmas and add small knobs of butter to the top.
5 Dilute the tomato paste in half a glass of water and add slowly to the side of the pan. When it comes to the boil, lower the heat and simmer, covered, for about 20–25 minutes.
6 Serve hot with a good natural yoghurt.

ERİK HOŞAFI
PRUNE AND APRICOT COMPOTE

100g prunes (any kind)
100g dried apricots
1 glass (125g) sugar
2 glasses drinking water

This simple compote is addictive. If you have the prized *üryani* prunes, use them on their own – and there is no need to soak them first, since they are skinless. Recipe books recommend saving the water the fruit is soaked in. Personally, I throw it away, as any sun-dried fruit may have dust or grit on the skin.
1 Soak the prunes and apricots overnight in plenty of water. If it is a last-minute decision, soak them for at least an hour before cooking, or they will be leathery.
2 Boil the sugar and water to a simple syrup in a deep pan.
3 Rinse the prunes and apricots and transfer them to the simmering syrup. Cook on a gentle heat, covered, for about 10 minutes, until the fruit softens and swells and the syrup thickens slightly.
4 Remove from the heat, cover and leave to cool, then refrigerate.
5 Serve chilled in individual bowls, perhaps topped with slices of banana or a dollop of plain fresh yoghurt. Both are tasty.

TAZE ERİK KOMPOSTOSU
FRESH PLUM COMPOTE

Plums (any kind)
1 glass granulated sugar
2 glasses drinking water
1 or 2 whole cloves

Any unwanted plums will do: those that are too sharp, unripe ones, leftovers from the table or simply surplus from a bumper harvest – this really simple treatment transforms them all into a delicious compote.
1 Rinse the plums and stone them if they are freestone plums; if the stones cling, don't bother.
2 Bring the water and sugar to the boil with the cloves in a deep pan. When all the sugar has dissolved, add the plums and simmer gently for 10 minutes or so. They should be tender but whole.
3 Cool and serve chilled.

ERİK PELTESİ
PLUM JELLY

500g plums (any kind)
Drinking water
1 glass sugar
Juice of 1/2 lemon (freshly squeezed)
1 tablespoon cornflour

This very light pudding is halfway in consistency between a fool and a jelly. Again, one can use any plums, but spring plums, being sharper than autumn plums, won't need the lemon juice. Deep-purple or dark-blue varieties cook to a lovely shade of violet.
1 Rinse the plums. Place in a pan, add water to cover and boil for 5 minutes or so, until the fruit is very soft.
2 Place a sieve over another deep pan and ladle the plums, with their cooking liquid, into the sieve. Purée by pressing the fruit through the sieve with the back of a wooden spoon.

Every area has its own varieties: these plums are from near the Sea of Marmara

3 Remove the stones and skin and return the pan to the heat. Add the sugar and bring to the boil, stirring.

4 Mix the lemon juice with a little water. Mix in the cornstarch and add quickly to the simmering fruit mixture, stirring continuously. When it thickens, remove from the heat.

5 While still hot, pour the *pelte* into individual bowls to set. Serve chilled.

Erik Reçeli
Plum Jam

1kg plums, preferably freestone
1kg granulated sugar
Juice of 1 lemon

This jam can be prepared with any kind of plums, but small freestone ones are best. Freestone varieties, such as the deep purplish damsons and *mürdüm*, become more common in late summer – their dark colour gives the jam a jewel-like appearance. The slightly tart edge goes well in winter with rich, clotted water-buffalo cream (*kaymak*).

1 Wash and halve the plums, and remove the stones unless they are clingstone, in which case leave whole. Place in a deep stainless-steel pan, add the sugar, cover and leave overnight. The fruit will release its juices under the weight of the sugar.

2 Next day, start cooking, uncovered, on a gentle heat, checking from time to time so as not to burn the sugar, otherwise the colour will suffer.

3 After about 45 minutes, the bubbles on the surface should reach the size of small walnuts, indicating that the jam is ready.

4 Stir in the lemon juice, turn the heat up, bring to the boil one last time and remove from the heat.

5 While still hot, ladle into sterilised jars, seal and store in a cool, dark place.

Erik Marmeladi
Plum Preserve

Plums
Water
Sugar
Juice of 1 lemon per kilo of plums

In Turkey any preserve made with whole fruit is called *reçel*. If it has been made with finely shredded or puréed fruit, it is "marmalade". Because the fruit is going to be pulped, use any windfall, unripe or bruised fruit unfit for the table. You can also mix different varieties. Plums are high in pectin, which means the preserve sets beautifully.

1 Rinse the fruit. Discard any plums that have worms in them and remove the tough bits with a knife.

2 Pack into a deep pan, cover with water and bring to the boil. Then simmer until all the fruit is soft, even slightly overcooked.

3 Press the contents of the pan through a sieve into a deep bowl. Discard the stones and skins. Transfer the pulp to a container so as to measure its volume, then return it to the pan.

4 Add to the pan half as much sugar as you have pulp. Bring to the boil, stirring with a wooden spoon. When all the sugar has dissolved and the liquid is bubbling, stir in the lemon juice. Bring back to the boil one last time and remove immediately from the heat.

5 Pour the preserve into sterilised jars, seal and store in a cool, dark place.

Erikli Kek
Plum Cake

A handful of plums
1 large egg
1 small teacup sugar
1/2 tablespoon lemon zest
2 tablespoons butter (melted)
1 small teacup flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
A pinch of salt
1 tablespoon brown sugar (optional)

This very simple cake can be made with any fruit – apples, pears, peaches or apricots as well as plums. Plums freeze well, and they are the easiest things to make cakes with if they are stoned and frozen in batches. Use the volume of egg as a guide to measurement. The broken egg, flour and sugar should all be more or less equal in volume. You can multiply the quantities as you please.

1 Halve and stone the plums.

2 Beat the egg with the sugar and lemon zest to a creamy consistency.

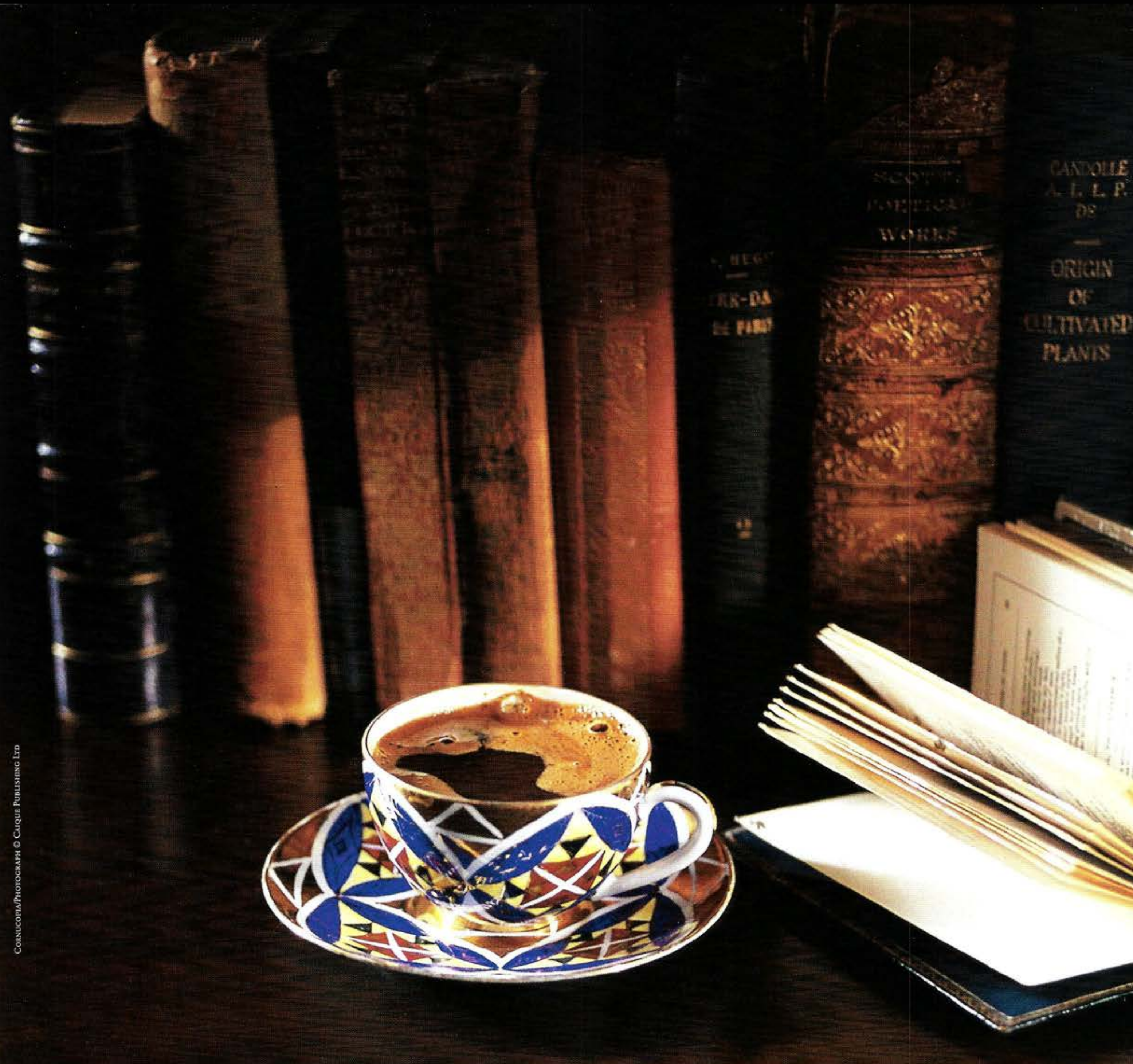
3 Fold in the butter and whisk.

4 Mix the flour with the baking powder and salt and sift into the bowl. Mix briefly and pour the dough into a buttered pie dish.

5 Arrange the prepared plum halves on the dough, skin side up. Dust the surface with brown sugar.

6 Bake in a moderate oven for 30 minutes, until the cake has risen and the plums have sunk below the surface, creating a lovely dimpled appearance. ◆

Berrin Torolsan: bt@cornucopia.net
For cookery articles in past issues, see cornucopia.net/cookerylisting.html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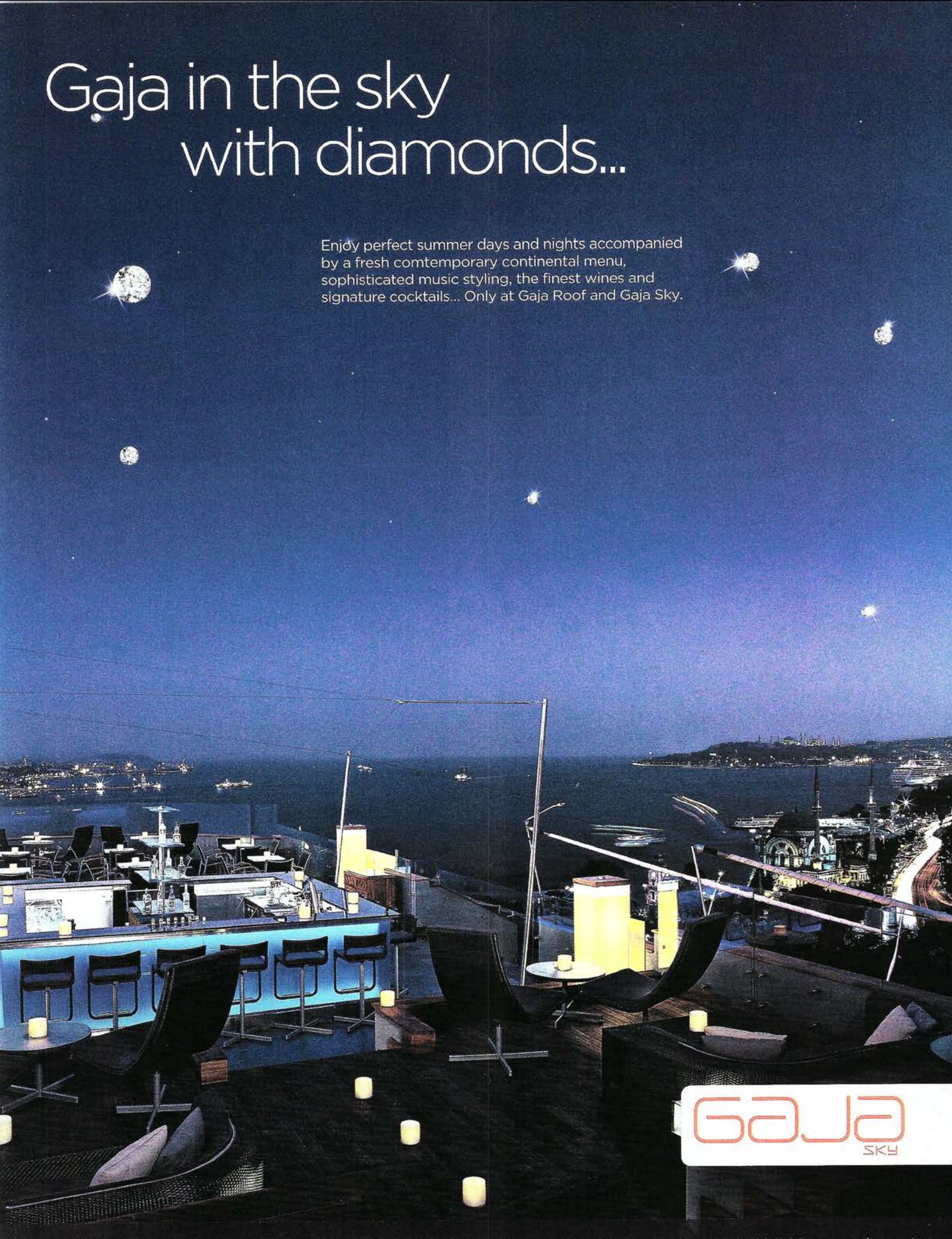
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A year after the death of her husband, Selim, Azize Ethem has been puzzling the neighbours with her green-minded gardening, enjoying tall tales of a giant catfish in the lake, viewing plans for the massive Izmit Bay suspension bridge with mixed feelings – and proving that she can't keep a secret

VILLAGE VOICES

Many of the locals have kept a close eye on me over the past year. Several friends have assured me it is acceptable to fall to pieces following the death of one's partner. Well, we all deal with these things in different ways but the villagers are now nodding their heads and muttering that they knew all along that I would eventually crack.

The proof is plain to see. Not only have I been seen collecting snails by hand, rather than tossing poison hither and thither, but I have been observed wrapping the smoother olive branches with double-sided tape. A band of very sticky glue surrounds the lower trunks of the trees and Mehmet Bean has told all in the tea-house that I am using a biological spray. The glue and the tape will hopefully trap unwanted insects as they crawl up the trees after hatching in the soil.

The last straw was when I festooned the trees with bottles filled with an elixir which is ambrosia to the male fruit fly. First in Dereköy, then in Iznik and now in Keramet I am a one-woman band trying to demonstrate that poisonous sprays are expensive and unnecessary. Time has taught me that the environmental argument carries no weight with the locals, where economics will sway them in a year or two.

Under the weather

Agricultural news is rather gloomy in the Iznik-Orhangazi area. Three days of heavy rain only a week before the cherries ripened caused the fruit to swell and split. Another deluge battered the olive blossom, leaving many trees totally barren of fruit, with the others sporting half a dozen lonely olives. The olive crop is the backbone of the local economy, so times will be hard not only for the farmers but also for the shopkeepers come November.

In early spring Mehmet planted green beans under my olive trees. Other farmers did the same, with the long lane to the main road edged by acres of beans. When harvest time arrived, 16 weeks after planting, the price of beans dropped so low it was not cost effective to harvest them. Row after row of yellowing plants brought home to me the difficulties farmers face.

In July and August we had unusually high temperatures, without the usual cooling breezes at night, and the second crop of beans is struggling to stay alive, while the leaves of many walnut and fruit trees are withered and brown.

A long fishy tale

A local fishy story has been clarified for me. Fishermen around the lake often relate yarns of monster fish, and Ahmet, who kept his boat near our Iznik home, repeatedly regaled Selim with a story about a fish so large that it dragged his boat for miles before snapping the line. Ahmet was well known for his love of *rakı*, so we used to smile at what was obviously an extremely tall tale which grew every time it was told.

Two weeks ago on the front page of the local paper was a large photo of an angler standing beside a catfish two-and-a-half metres long. Another myth has bitten the dust. And although I am sure giant catfish don't eat people, I've given up any thought of swimming in the lake.

A bridge too far?

Over the last few months land speculators have appeared in the Izmit-to-Yalova area and are moving inch by inch towards Iznik. Over the next few years property prices around here are going to sky-rocket, I am told. All the trappings of progress are going to crowd in on those of us who choose to live removed from such modern marvels. This has been prompted by the tender being accepted and finalised for the Izmit Bay Bridge. A Turkish-international consortium has won the contract and the Izmit Bay Bridge will span the eastern end of the Sea of Marmara.

As it is to be sited on the north Anatolian fault zone, preconstruction teams are examining the geophysics of the area and all the other factors involved in building the second largest suspension bridge in the world.

Within ten years, at a cost of $6.5 billion, this six-lane suspension bridge, along with a new road, will cut travel time from Istanbul to Izmir by half. I guess that will change for the better the lives of a lot of people. Time will tell what it will do to the shores of the Iznik Lake.

Pillow talk

May 2010 marked the 25th anniversary of Selim's and my arrival to settle in Turkey. The changes in this country during that time are amazing. Dereköy was then a typical southwestern Turkish village. Electricity was an on-again-off-again commodity. The nearest heath clinic was 30 kilometres away, with the village's one telephone only working spasmodically. The road to Istanbul was narrow and rutted. Trucks belching black fumes, with towering, lopsided loads, held up traffic as they inched up hills. At least we had a continuous water supply – which is more than can be said for Istanbul in the 1980s.

Now our roads and services equal, or are even superior to, those in Europe. Although I live over a kilometre from the village, I have every mod-con one would expect in Europe.

I was the first foreigner to live in Dereköy, and as anyone who came from even 20 kilometres away was considered an outsider I was the subject of intense scrutiny. Having watched imported TV programmes, the local women all knew about the promiscuity of western women. When a bevy of village wives descended on my little cottage there were looks of horror accompanied by much whispering the minute one of them noticed there were three pillows on the double bed. The people of Dereköy have since learned the peculiar ways of foreigners, but Keramet is not a tourist magnet, so I have just one pillow on my bed to avoid confusion.

The best-kept secret

Wednesday is Iznik market day and, although I am now closer to Orhangazi, I make the trip to the town I am familiar with. Each week at lunchtime a group of us meets at our favourite *lokanta* to eat and catch up on the latest events. Last week my friend Nikki had a piece of news so hot that at this stage few details are known. It is such a huge secret that nobody is supposed to know about it. Various government agencies have visited Iznik and sworn to secrecy the few people involved. That means, of course, that the news has spread like wildfire.

What we do know is that some unfortunate man bought a plot of land to build a house a couple of streets east of the Lefka Gate. Excavation work revealed a magnificent mosaic floor and other treasures. It has been mooted, because of the quality of the mosaics, that it may be the site of the Roman governors' palace, which has always been thought to be on the lake shore. The floor has been recovered with soil to keep it hidden from all of us who don't know of its existence. Now we all await the authorities' next move. Meanwhile the owner of the land can kiss goodbye to any thought of a new home, and the neighbours are digging their vegetable patches very timidly. ◆

'Beyond the Orchard', by Azize Ethem (Çitlembik), is available to CORNUCOPIA *subscribers at £6.50, post free*

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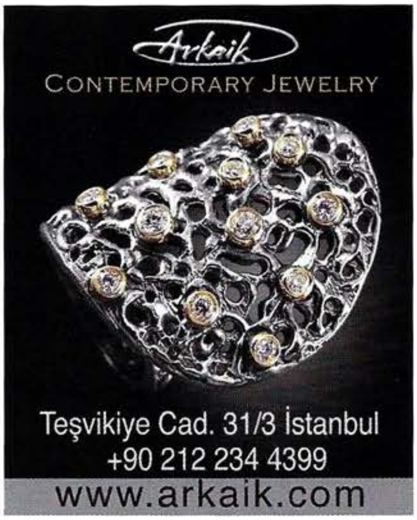

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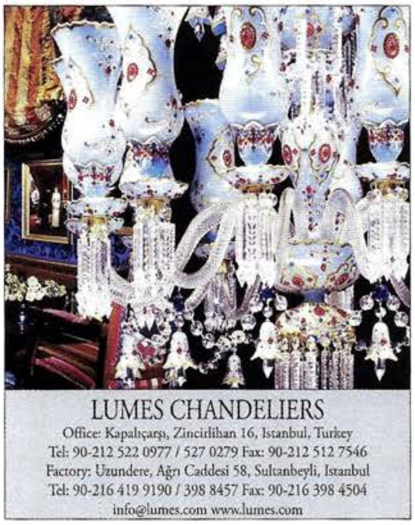

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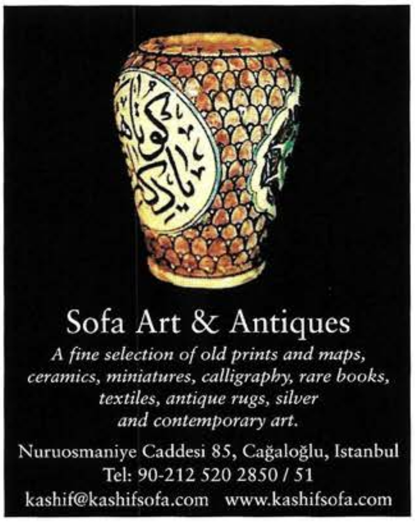

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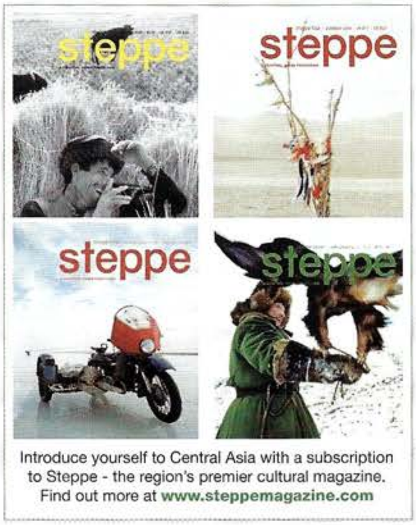

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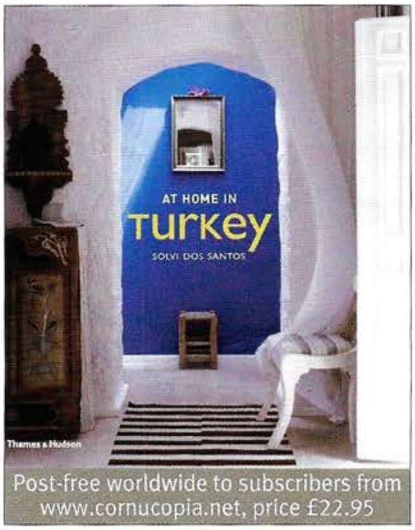

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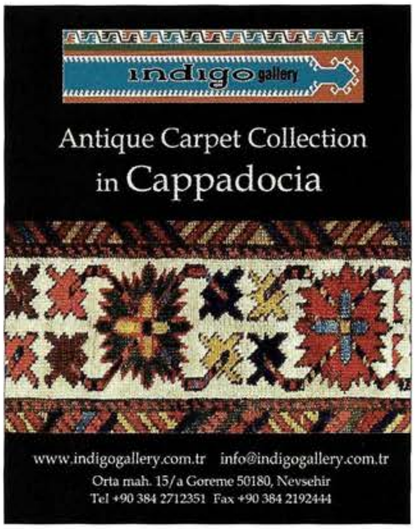

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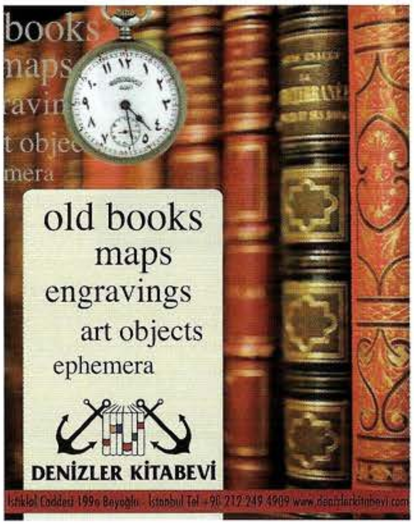

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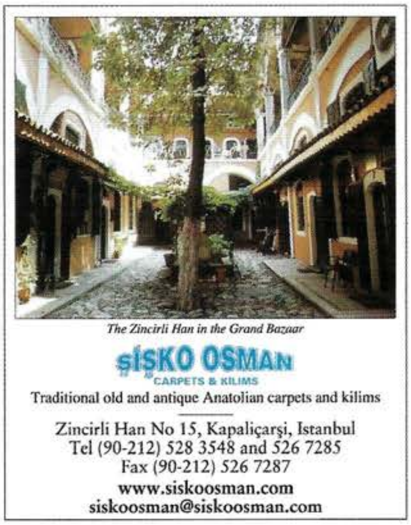

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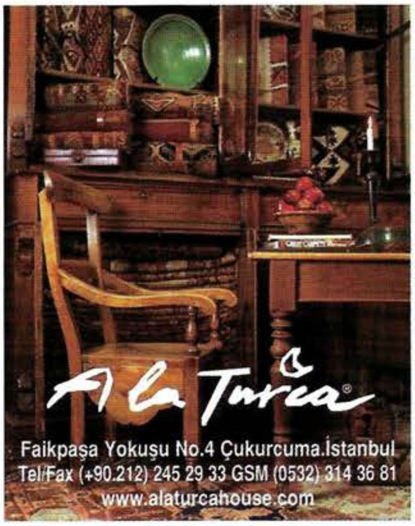

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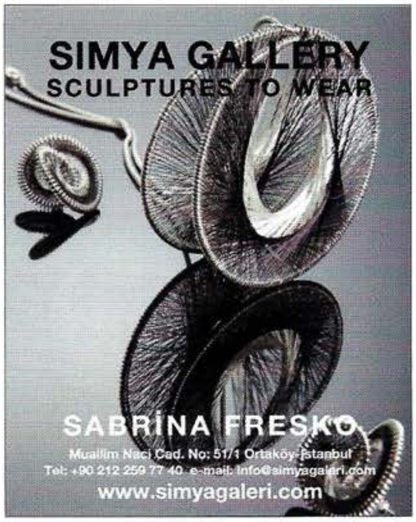

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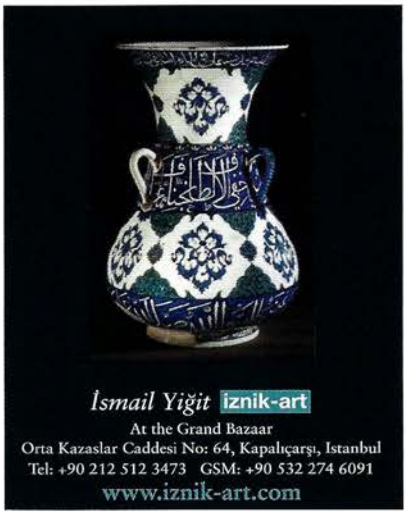

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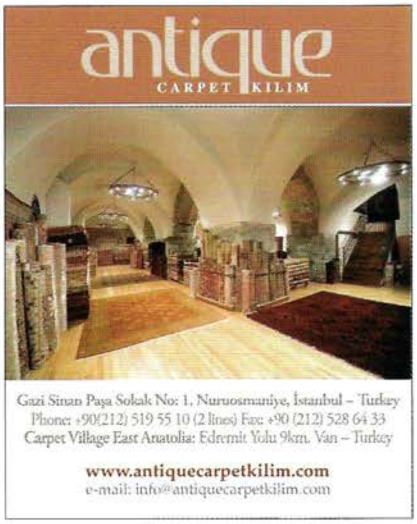

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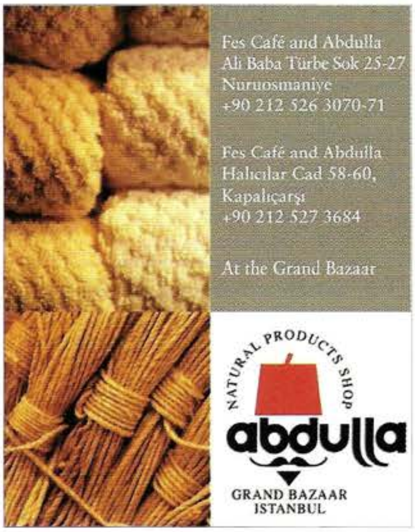

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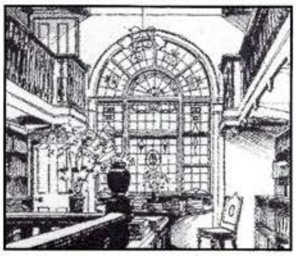

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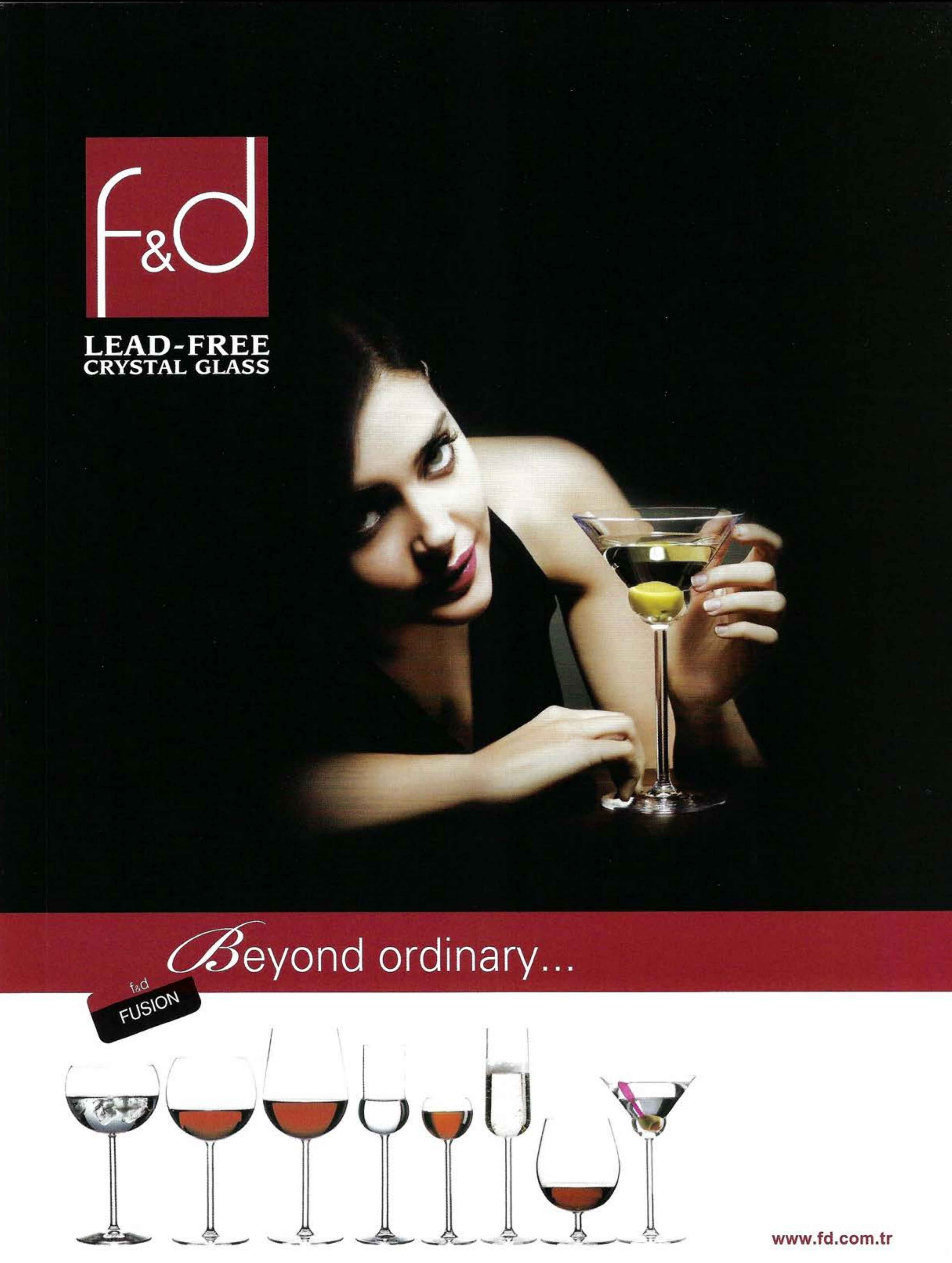
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On a quest for Istanbul's Perfect Watering Hole, Andrew Finkel and his band of diners let a new book be their guide. They begin at Haydarpaşa Station with a fortifying glass of raki. Then they set off for unfamiliar places, and who knows what culinary challenges. Can there ever be a happy ending?

In search of the ultimate meyhane

The Turkish word *sofra* doesn't so much mean "table" as "table groaning with food". "Spread" might be closer, but even that doesn't do justice to the notion of a *rakı sofrası,* any more than "cuppa" befits the Japanese tea ceremony. The *rakı* table is a ritualised sharing of very particular sorts of food, but the conversation and the etiquette are as much a part of the *sofra* as melon and white cheese. It is a place to pursue that elusive sense that something might be right with the world after all.

I was always puzzled by an older generation who rarely ate out, then always went to the same restaurant – somewhere like the classic fish restaurant Hasan's in Yeşilköy, with no more glamour than a fish-and-chip shop and serving the routine aubergine salad, fried calamari and grilled fish, albeit to a very high standard. Today the city's elite are more likely to eat a cold sesame spinach salad and crispy fried squid with green chilli and salt at the Japanese fusion chain Zuma. It is the age-old dilemma: reach out for the comfort of the familiar or hunt for the jolt of the new?

We were faced with just that dilemma on Bağdad Caddesi the other night. We could have turned east to go to Mastori, with its bouzouki music, but instead turned west and ended up in the very un*meyhane*-ish Mongolian Barbeque. The principle here (according to its website, for a modest £34,000 you could set up an 80-seat franchise in your own back yard) is that you load a bowl with raw bits of protein and veg from the buffet, choose from an array of sauces, hand it over to the kitchen, and the results, as in *Born Free,* find their way back to you, although, unlike Elsa the lion cub, on a plate with noodles. The best one can say about Mon BBQ is that it is very clean. It is an ersatz novelty, a controlled shot of excitement. But a visit to a *meyhane* should be an adventure.

Even adventures require a bit of preparation, and I seized on a new publication in my search for an establishment where everything is full of flavour and devoid of pretension. *Meyhanes & Fish Restaurants of Istanbul* lists some 130 places, up-market and down, and is an affectionate tribute to the cultural paraphernalia attached to this classic Istanbul meal. Did you know, for example, that the "traditional" tall, thin *rakı* glass replaced a stem glass like those used by the two men in evening dress who do their drinking on the iconic Kulüp Rakı label?

More useful than the guide to the variety of *meyhane* dishes is the section on how fast you can drink over a four-hour meal. A single *rakı* an hour puts you in good spirits (*keyif*); a double an hour is going at *filispit* (full speed), and if you can crank up to four doubles you wind up in a *koma* (coma). A weightier question than how much you should drink is where you should do it, and here the book is a bit like *rakı* itself – bold, flavourful and hugely deceptive, leaving you wondering the next day just what you thought you were up to.

I did not seek the Holy Grail of the Perfect Watering Hole on my own. After much flicking through the guide, a group of us decided on a place in an Asian suburb along the Sea of Marmara, the tree-lined neighbourhood of Sapanbağları, which doubles as Istanbul's Little Bosnia. It sounded perfect. There were wooden tables and a local clientele, but also gastronomic pilgrims from a wider area in search of the city's best Bosnian cuisine. Our shrine's name was Sancak. The trouble was how to get there.

The longest journey begins with a single drink. In this case, we chose Haydarpaşa Station, where we could catch the commuting train to Pendik. As coincidence would have it, the station restaurant is the very first entry in *Meyhanes & Fish Restaurants of Istanbul*, where it is described as having a "unique personality". Haydarpaşa is a wonderful building, a Teutonic castle completed in 1908 as the terminus for the Baghdad railway on a scale never remotely justified by the passenger traffic it sees. Its days as a station are said to be numbered. That day it turned out to be bustling with people going every which way – not that they were trying to catch a train. They were carefully orchestrated extras in a film being shot there.

The restaurant is not wonderful but it is certainly eclectic, with mosque-like tiled panels that fit uneasily in a square, high-ceilinged room. It is like stepping back in time to circa 1975, when the height of sophistication was to take the ferry from the European side to Haydarpaşa and linger before finishing the commute home. Everything, including the very cold beer, is reasonably priced, and I would more than recommend it as the Istanbul equivalent to the inexpensive thrill of a trip on the Staten Island Ferry. Take a boat from Karaköy to Haydarpaşa to view the sunset over the historic peninsula, then nip into the Gar Lokantası for a quick reward.

It was not our plan to stay for the usual dinner of lamb chops and stewed fruit. Instead we boarded the slow suburban train. From Pendik we hopped on a bus for the five-minute journey to Sancak and waited for the culinary fireworks to begin.

Sancak (Sanjak) is certainly a friendly place, and the waiters were more than obliging. There are dark wooden tables and rustic implements on the wall, hung between plastic faux-stone cladding. The effect recalled roadside cafés in the former Yugoslavia. An array of screens broadcast Bosnian pop shows with women in electric-coloured body armour and men in open-necked pastel shirts.

We got off on the wrong foot with a meze called *soka*, a green pepper stuffed with cream that has fermented into cheese. Interesting but not worth the detour. A cured meat called *pirşuta* (a beef prosciutto) was tasty. I was not entirely an innocent abroad. In Sarajevo I have eaten delicious *cevap* (kebab) on crusty flat bread with cabbage salad at the Hodzic meatball shop. The waiter at Sancak brought us *pleskavica* – a large flat meatball cooked with *kaşar* cheese. It was so-so. I am sure if I were of Balkan stock, I would be more rhapsodic about Sancak. But I'm not.

A *meyhane* is a place where for one reason or another you feel at home, and this was not mine. I decided the book was a bit like the people whose stories you listen to at a *rakı sofrası* – entertaining but not reliable. Then I read the disclaimer that it didn't set out to be a gastronomic guide. Fair enough.

The story has a happy ending. I went the other night to Denizpark in Yeniköy, better known as Aleko's. We had the aubergine salad, and an interesting fresh anchovy croquette – two butterflied fish served as a wrapper for creamy spinach. My second *rakı* arrived as the same time as the perfectly fried slices of bonito. I had been there years before, and it has since been spruced up to serve a more prosperous clientele… I guess I've been spruced up over the years as well. It felt comfortable. Our table was by the water, and it came to me that this was the ingredient I was in pursuit of. Eating on the Bosphorus, a black expanse of water punctuated by shimmers of reflected light, is the real Istanbul luxury. ◆

Meyhanes & Fish Restaurants of Istanbul, by Tan Morgül and Ulus Atayurt (text in English and Turkish), Overteam Yayınları, TL24

Denizpark Restaurant (Aleklo'nin Yeri)
Daire Sok 9/A, Yeniköy; +90 212 262 0415
Hasan Balıkçılar (Hasan'ın Yeri)
Rıhtım Sok 8, Yeşilköy; + 90 212 573 8300
Haydarpaşa Gar Lokantası
Haydarpaşa Station; +90 216 337 0979
Mongolian BBQ Turkey
Suadiye Plaj Yolu, Suadiye; +90 216 410 3223
Sancak Merkez
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www.thehousehotel.com info@thehousehotel.com
Tel 90-212 244 3400 Fax 90-212 244 7577

Zeytin Konak Hotel – Alaçatı, Çeşme

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Sedirli Ev – Alaçatı, Çeşme

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www.sedirliev.com
info@sedirliev.com
Tel 90-232 716 9271 Fax 90-232 716 6565

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www.emzoe.com info@emzoe.com
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www.museum-hotel.com
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